- **Sports / A26** Miami wins, puts heat on Detroit
- **News / A5** Dichaves owned bank account, Pimentel says
- **Across / A17** Batangas Ombudsman shot dead
- **News/ A9** Metro Manila workers get P25 wage hike
- **Entertainment / A28** Basil Valdez remembers Richard Tann

RP 99% 'jueteng'-free? Rosales not amused

MAGIC BA O MIRACLE?

By Christian Esguerra, Luige A. del Puerto and Alcuin Papa

THE PHILIPPINES is "99-percent" free from "jueteng," according to the Philippine National

RP/ A20

PHILIPPINE DAILY
INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

Explain Boracay project, lawmakers ask AFP brass

By Philip C. Tubeza and Bernice Mendoza

LAWMAKERS yesterday said they would seek an explanation from the Armed Forces and defense department on the secret construction of a military resort on Boracay, revealed in an exclusive INQUIRER report, in the midst of

EXPLAIN/ A20

email: feedback@inquirer.com.ph Tuesday, May 31, 2005 ★★★ 50 pages 5 sections Vol. 20 No. 172 P18 website: www.inq7.net

Witness tags Mikey in 'jueteng' payola

2 congressmen, ex-lawmaker, gov also named

By Juliet Labog-Javellana

THE NAMES tumbled out of his lips like bombs in a packed Senate hearing seen by television viewers across the nation.

Testifying for three hours under a cloak of immunity, confessed "jueteng" operator Wilfredo Cimanis Mayor yesterday said President Macapagal-Arroyo's son, Pampanga Rep. Juan Miguel "Mikey" Arroyo, two other incumbent congressmen and a former lawmaker used bagmen to receive huge gambling payoffs from him.

Mayor said Arroyo's payola amounted to "P600,000 per month" from one area alone. He said this was the amount of the protection money he had agreed to give to the bagman purportedly sent by Arroyo.

But Mayor made it clear that he had no hard evidence to back his allegations against Arroyo, saying his statements were based mainly on what the bagman had told him.

The 50-year-old barangay chair also insinuated that Philippine National Police Director General Arturo Lomibao and Chief Supt. Victor Luga were jueteng protectors when they were assigned in the provinces as regional directors.

He also linked unnamed governors, mayors, members of the police and of media to the underground lottery racket.

Arroyo and the others whom Mayor alluded to promptly dismissed the allegations as a tissue of lies. *(See related story on Page A8.)*

"Mayor was obviously coached to include me so that they would have a big fish to implicate," Arroyo said in a statement, branding the allegations as completely untrue.

Arroyo also said: "Obviously, this testimony has been trumped up to forcibly drag me and other administration figures, including my fellow congressmen from Albay, into this controversy."

"It is saddening that the Senate has been made a forum to launch these guided missiles against us," he said.

Arroyo, who was vice governor of Pampanga at the time of the alleged payoffs, reiterated that he had never received payments or had been involved in jueteng, adding that he was even against its legalization.

The temperature inside the Recto and Laurel Rooms of the Senate was as hot as Mayor's testimony.

Mayor, a barangay chair from Tagas, Daraga, Albay, mentioned three active or former representatives from Albay—ex-lawmaker Krisel Lagman-Luistro, Rep. Carlos Imperial and Rep. Jose Ma. "Joey" Salceda—as having received monthly jueteng protection money totaling P250,000, P300,000 and P400,000, respectively.

Mayor said he operated jueteng games in Albay, Pangasinan, Baguio City and Benguet between 1995 and 1998 and between 2001 and 2003.

Senators smiled when Mayor cleared all the senators of in-

WITNESS/ A8

REP. Juan Miguel "Mikey" Arroyo: Testimony trumped-up

LOMIBAO: Could not recall meeting.

SALCEDA: I don't know it. I deny it.

LAGMAN-LUISTRO: Complete canard.

SANCHEZ: Politically motivated witch-hunt.

JUETENG PAYOLA

According to Wilfredo Cimanis Mayor, alias "Boy Mayor," "Boy Bicol" or "BM," the jueteng payola amounted to P7.5 million a month, which were given to the following persons through their alleged bagmen:

P7.5 M / mo.

P400,000/week	PNP Regional Commander
P883,000/mo.	"Local media"
P200,000/week	PNP Provincial Director
P200,000/week	Camp Crame c/o Boy Tangkad
P600,000/mo.	Rep. Juan Miguel "Mikey" Arroyo
P400,000/mo.	Albay Rep. Jose "Joey" Salceda
P300,000/mo.	Albay Rep. Carlos Imperial
P250,000/mo.	Ex- Albay Rep. Krisel Lagman-Luistro
P200,000/mo.	"Media Manila"
P180,000/mo.	DILG "operatives"
P148,000/mo.	"NBI Manila"
P120,000/mo.	IG (Intelligence Group) Crame

MAYOR: We operate by word of honor.

JESS YUSON

INQGRAPHIC: E. SAMBO

GMA slams opposition over smear campaign

By Carla P. Gomez
PDI Visayas Bureau

SAN CARLOS CITY—President Macapagal-Arroyo yesterday accused the opposition of conducting a smear campaign against her administration by implicating her husband, son and brother-in-law in the "jueteng" scandal in a bid to "undermine my ability to govern."

Speaking at the inauguration of the national fuel ethanol program in this city hours before the Senate began its inquiry into the illegal numbers racket, the President made the strongest statement yet defending First Gentleman Jose Miguel Arroyo, her son Pampanga Rep. Juan Miguel Arroyo and her brother-in-law Rep. Ignacio Arroyo.

Ms Arroyo was outlining challenges facing her administration now that she had embarked on the second phase of her economic reform program when she referred to the jueteng allegations against her family.

"Don't think that I'm somehow naive or unrealistic. I'm fully aware of the challenges that remain and the lengths to which the opposition would go to undermine my ability to govern," she said.

"For instance, the allegations against my husband, my son and even my brother-in-law are part of a well-worn opposition tactic," the President said.

"Although no proof had been offered, I'm taking the allegations seriously and I've asked for an intense investigation and will let the chips fall where they may."

GMA SLAMS/ A8

'Small people are the ones victimized'

By Norman Bordadora

CALCULATING yet aggressive—that was how confessed "jueteng" operator Wilfredo Cimanis Mayor came across when he spoke at the Senate yesterday and set off his bombshell, sparing not even the President's elder son.

Mayor, 50, portrayed himself as a man who tried to cover his tracks while expanding his illegal gambling operation from its modest start in a small barangay in Daraga, Albay, into a multimillion-peso business covering the huge market of Pangasinan as far north as Benguet.

He told the senators that at one time, he was grossing as much as P90 million a month from his hometown jueteng operations.

So wary was he of a paper trail that he burned his jueteng ledgers and other loose sheets every month, Mayor said. He said he stopped his operations in late 2003 to run for mayor of Daraga in the May 2004 elections.

Mayor lost not only the election but also his jueteng "franchises" in Albay and in northern Luzon. Another gambling lord had taken over and he could not squeeze himself back in.

"Jueteng is a bane of society," Mayor said in his preliminaries at the Senate inquiry into the illegal numbers game, sounding like a man who had had a dramatic change of heart.

"The small people are the ones who are victimized ... If before there was no cheating in jueteng, today cheating in this numbers game is already ongoing," the ex-jueteng operator and financier said.

Mayor said demands for pro-

SMALL/ A4

MISS PHILIPPINES-EARTH

Genebelle Raagas (center) waves to the crowd after being proclaimed Miss Philippines-Earth at the UP Theater in Quezon City. Flanking her are (from left) April Lyn Villanueva, Miss Philippines-Ecotourism; Nadia Lee Cien de la Cruz, Miss Philippines-Air; Arleine Villanueva, Miss Philippines-Water, and Antonette Stephanie Yu, Miss Philippines-Fire.

RYAN LIM

Gov't hospital officials confirm dark stories in delivery rooms

By Christian V. Esguerra

THE TONGUE-LASHINGS turned out to be true.

Two officials of Dr. Jose Fabella Memorial Hospital in Manila yesterday admitted they were aware that some of their doctors and nurses had verbally abused pregnant mothers, as told to the INQUIRER by two health workers and a former nursing trainee.

But Doctors Jeffrey Leonardo and Sylvia de la Paz said the cases were "isolated" and involved either misguided or overworked staff members of the government hospital.

"We've caught them several times doing what could be considered verbal abuse to some patients," De la Paz told the INQUIRER, referring to some medical residents.

Leonardo, chief of the hospital's medical profession services,

GOV'T/ A4

RP economy shows resilience

By Michelle V. Remo
Business

THE PHILIPPINE economy showed resilience in the first three months of the year, growing by 4.6 percent despite weak agriculture output, sluggish exports and high oil prices, according to government data.

The first-quarter growth of the gross domestic product (GDP), the sum of all the goods and services produced within the Philippines, was lower than the 5-percent growth forecast made by Socioeconomic Planning Secretary Romulo Neri three weeks ago.

In comparison, the country's GDP expanded by 6.4 percent in the same period in 2004 en route to a full-year 6.1 percent growth, the best in eight years.

A computation by Reuters, however, indicated the GDP grew by a seasonally adjusted 1.1 percent from the last quarter of 2004, picking up from the 0.6 percent growth in the October-to-December period.

Romulo Virola, secretary gen-

RP ECONOMY/ A20

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: The whole country will experience mostly cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and thunderstorms. Light to moderate winds blowing from the southwest will prevail throughout the archipelago with slight to moderate coastal waters. SOURCE: PAGASA

COMPILED BY CYRIL L. BONABENTE, PDI RESEARCH/05/31/05

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Text us your feedback: inquirer news name/age/city/message to 2207 (Globe) or 283 (Smart)

Metro Manila	Cloudy with Rains	Iloilo/Bacolod	Cloudy with Rains
Baguio	Cloudy with Rains	Roxas	Cloudy with Rains
Tuguegarao	Cloudy with Rains	Cebu	Cloudy with Rains
Laoag	Cloudy with Rains	Tacloban	Cloudy with Rains
Clark Zone	Cloudy with Rains	Gen. Santos	Cloudy with Rains
Tagaytay	Cloudy with Rains	Zamboanga	Cloudy with Rains
Legazpi	Cloudy with Rains	Cagayan de Oro	Cloudy with Rains
Calapan	Cloudy with Rains	Davao	Cloudy with Rains

BEYOND HONORABLE, LASTING PEACE

Moros want more than autonomy

CAMP DARAPANAN—Muslim separatists in the southern Philippines said Monday that peace was within reach but that they wanted more than autonomy in exchange for permanently ending three decades of conflict.

Ebrahim Murad, chair of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front, told up to 100,000 supporters gathered in this guerrilla camp that "just, honorable and lasting peace is partly at hand," as the rebels prepared to enter a key round of peace talks with the government in Malaysia.

Murad denounced terrorism and said Malaysian-brokered negotiations—bolstered by a two-year ceasefire—showed that "seemingly irreconcilable issues" could be resolved as long as both sides approached the peace process with "an open mind and sincerity."

"After decades of unrelenting struggle, our flickering hope for a just and comprehensive political solution ... is rekindled," said Murad from an intricately festooned stage flanked by cornfields and coconut plantations. He appealed to Christians to "cast aside mistrust" of Muslims.

Tangible result

At a meeting in Kuala Lumpur last month, the two sides made progress on resolving the Muslims' territorial rights claims—the first tangible result in years of negotiations. Another round of talks is scheduled for next month.

Rebel spokesperson Eid Kabalu said the three-day MILF open assembly, which ends today, aims to devise a "new formula" to address long-standing grievances of Filipino Muslims, who have accused the government in the predominantly Roman Catholic country of neglecting their rights and economic development.

"Obviously, the present formula—autonomy—is not working," Kabalu said.

"None of these formulas implemented in the past have solved the problems of our people," said Ghazali Jaafar, MILF vice chair for political affairs, likening such solutions to trying to cure the sick with the wrong medicine.

Federal approach

"The more he takes the pill, the more his illness gets worse," Kabalu told the gathering.

He said the MILF was open to various proposals, including a federal approach with less centralized government control.

The government has indicated it would consider expanding an autonomous region for Muslims beyond the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao, which was created as a result of a 1996 peace agreement with a former rebel group, the Moro National Liberation Front.

MILF veterans broke away from the MNLF because they were unhappy with the existing arrangements.

GMA statement

President Macapagal-Arroyo yesterday hailed the peace consultations and expressed confidence peace would eventually reign in the South.

"I welcome and support all peaceful, democratic and people-based consultations for peace and development," the President said in a statement.

She also commended the military and police as well as the MILF for their efforts to secure the "huge peace consultation of MILF constituencies."

The three-day assembly, the biggest gathering of members and sympathizers of the secessionist group that opened Sunday, was called to affirm the MILF as the representative of the Bangsamoro people as well as to consult members on solutions to the Mindanao problem.

"The nation gathers its strength from the diversity of ideas and aspirations channeled into effective democratic processes and won on the negotiating table and not in the battlefield," President Arroyo said.

MILF Chair Ebrahim Murad and Libyan Ambassador Salem Adam listen to a speaker on the second day of the consultative assembly.
VAL HANDUMON

Muddy trail

Murad welcomed diplomats from Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) countries, World Bank officials and Philippine government representatives as they were escorted along a muddy trail into this camp on the outskirts of Cotabato City on the island of Mindanao.

A sea of colorful tents and umbrellas shielded Muslim men and women in colorful traditional attire as they squatted to listen to Murad speak.

While MILF fighters were prepared to die for their cause, Murad said the group was "very much opposed to any form of terrorism," which he said was "incompatible" with the group's struggle to bring economic and political development to the poor areas of Mindanao.

Murad's statement came after Kabalu said the MILF had agreed to hunt down 53 Islamic militants as part of an agreement in 2002 to interdict or arrest terrorist elements in their areas.

"We have a list of criminal elements the government has submitted to us to be apprehended," Kabalu told reporters late Sunday.

Janjalani on list

MILF officials were now "validating" the list, which includes the names of renegade Muslim rebels with possible links to the Jemaah Islamiyah (JI) as well as Khadaffy Janjalani, the leader of the Abu Sayyaf.

The Abu Sayyaf has been blamed for the Philippines' worst terrorist bombings and a spate of kidnappings, while the JI is said to be linked to al-Qaida.

Intelligence reports that foreign JI members were undergoing bomb-making training in MILF camps had persistently hampered the peace negotiations.

The MILF has denied the reports, but security analysts said JI elements appeared to be increasingly infiltrating Islamic liberation movements, including the MILF and the Abu Sayyaf.

Asked whether the MILF would arrest any of its own commanders if they were found to be shielding those on the wanted list, Kabalu said: "Yes, of course. That is the mandate of the AJAG (Ad Hoc Joint Action Group)." *Christine O. Avendaño; AP, AFP, Reuters*

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Program-At-A-Glance

	Friday, 3 June	Saturday, 4 June				Sunday, 5 June			Monday, 6 June		
8:00 AM	REGISTRATION	1st Forum of Philippine Partnership to Fight TB, Malaria and AIDS	PL.1	Hamao Umezawa Award Lecture Antibiotic usage Historical perspective and challenges Prof. Calvin M. Kunin, USA	Plenary Hall	PL.3	Healthcare response to HIV in the Third world: Challenges and strategies Prof. Hoosen M. Coovadia, South Africa	Plenary Hall	PL.5	Gene tricks to escape antibiotics Prof. Jean-Claude Pechere, Switzerland	Plenary Hall
			PL.2	Emerging viral diseases: Deciphering the writings on the wall Prof. S.K. Lam, Malaysia	Plenary Hall	PL.4	Grand strategies for cancer management Prof. Ian Magrath, Belgium	Plenary Hall	PL.6	24th ICC Manila Declaration Prof. Jean-Claude Pechere, Switzerland	Plenary Hall
			Poster Session 1			Poster Session 3			Poster Session 5		
			S.1	Better devices for fewer infections	MR5	S.13	Biofilms: From bench to the bedside	MR7	S.25	Isolation for Infectious Disease-Current concepts & practices	MR 2/3
			S.2	Public health and therapeutic strategies to limit antimicrobial resistance	MR2/3	S.14	Travel-associated issues in infectious diseases	MR5	S.26	Antimicrobial resistance in Gram-negative infections	MR 6
			S.3	Challenges to HIV control	MR4	S.15	Avian influenza	MR2/3	S.27	New developments in viral vaccines	MR 7
			S.4	Retinoblastoma: Public health and clinical interventions	MR8	S.16	The changing landscape in the treatment of breast cancer	MR8	S.28	Lung cancer: Challenge to management in Asia	MR 8
			S.5	Challenges in the management of fungal infections	MR7	ISS.4	Empiric therapy of today's polymicrobial infections - Available options and alternatives	MR4	S.29	Updates on parasitic infections	MR 4
			ISS.1	Appropriate antibiotic and antifungal use in the hospital setting	MR6	ISS.5	Overview of the antibiotic management in acute exacerbation chronic bronchitis	MR6	S.30	Global threats and global preparedness	MR 5
12:00 NN			Poster Session 2	ISS.2. Azalides revisited	MR4	Poster Session 4					
			S.6	The healthcare worker: Maximizing service, minimizing risk	MR2/3	S.17	Hospital-acquired pneumonia	MR5	S.31	Surveillance and healthcare-associated infection	MR 2/3
			S.7	Update on viral infections from Europe	MR4	S.18	Pneumonia in children	MR2/3	S.32	Respiratory infections in Asia	MR 6
			S.8	Emerging antimicrobial resistance in Gram-negative infections	MR7	S.19	Clinical impact of pharmacokinetics and pharmacodynamics in 2005	MR4	S.33	Pan-resistant super-bugs	MR 7
			S.9	Decreasing TB mortality and morbidity	MR5	S.20	Tuberculosis: Immunology and therapy	MR7	S.34	Emerging and re-emerging infectious diseases in the Western Pacific	MR 5
			S.10	Issues in cancer clinical trials	MR8	S.21	Evolving approaches to the management of cervical cancer	MR8	SAL.9 SAL.10	Inflammation, aging and neoplasia Lung cancer: From bench to clinic	MR 4
			ISS.3	Appropriate antibiotic therapy: The empiric approach	MR6	S.22	Hepatitis: Diagnosis, pathogenesis and vaccination	MR6	S.35	Antimicrobial resistance in Gram-positive infections	MR 8
3:30 PM			Break			Break			Break		
			S.11	Evidence-based infectious diseases: Key evidence 2004-2005 (an interactive session)	MR5	S.23	New techniques in the diagnosis and management of pneumonia	MR5	S.36	Clinical infections: Interactive sessions	MR 6
			S.12	9th International Symposium on UTI/STD: Novel aspects for pathogenesis and prevention of UTI	MR6	S.24	9th International Symposium on UTI/STD: Nosocomial and catheter-associated UTI	MR6	S.37	9th International Symposium on UTI/STD: Management of UTI in special patients group	MR 4
			RTD.1	Antibiotic use and antimicrobial resistance	MR7	SAL.1 SAL.2	Pharmacogenomics and drug discovery Impact of transporter mediated disposition and interaction in chemotherapy Applications of pharmacodynamics in drug development New and older agents	MR7			
			RTD.2	The politics of TB drug development	MR4	SAL.3 SAL.4 SAL.5	Antimicrobial resistance Defining the problem and implementing effective control measures Globalization of Multidrug-resistant TB Immunomodulating agents in antimicrobial resistance	MR4	SAL.11 SAL.12	Dengue Diagnosis, treatment and epidemiology The WHO-UNAIDS '3x5' Initiative Progress today, issues and challenges for tomorrow	MR 5
			RTD.3	Innovations in infection control in resource constrained setting	MR2/3	SAL.6 SAL.7 SAL.8	Technological advances in hospital infection control Quality improvement in infection control in resource constrained setting Economic and public health implications of healthcare-associated infections	MR2/3	S.38	Issues and concerns among infection control nurse practitioners	MR 2/3
	Opening Ceremonies		WS.1	Basic data management in cancer research I: Personnel and methods in data collection	MR8	WS.2	Basic data management in cancer research II: Documents	MR8	WS.3	Basic data management in cancer research III: Data quality assurance	MR 8

Legend: PL- Plenary Lecture RTD- Round Table Discussion S- Symposium SAL- State-of-the-Art Lecture WS- Workshop ISS- Industry Sponsored Symposium MR- Meeting Room

Cuban request a ploy?

UNDIPLOMATIC and a mere media ploy to embarrass the United States.

This sentiment has surfaced in the Department of Foreign Affairs in reaction to the Cuban Embassy's recent use of a press conference rather than official channels to seek Manila's support for the extradition of a Cuban renegade from the US.

While Foreign Secretary Alberto Romulo yesterday said the matter was to be "studied," another ranking DFA official said Havana should have first conveyed its request formally through the department.

"It's undiplomatic because it didn't follow the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations," said the official, who asked not to be named. "It's usually done discreetly."

The official surmised that the press conference, held last Saturday in Makati City by Cuban Ambassador Jorge Rey Jimenez, was just "for media mileage to embarrass the US."

Facing reporters, Jimenez had asked Philippine officials to help sway Washington into extraditing Luis Posada Carriles, the principal suspect in the 1976 bombing of a Cuban airliner that killed 73 people.

Posada had sought political asylum in the US last month after escaping from a Venezuelan prison while awaiting sentencing for the airplane bombing. The Cuban Embassy claimed Posada worked for the US Central Intelligence Agency.

The Cuban Embassy should have first communicated the request to the DFA, "then maybe we could [have held] a joint press conference," the DFA official said.

DFA spokesperson Gilberto Asuque, meanwhile, said the department had yet to receive an official communication from the Cuban Embassy regarding Posada.

Volt Contreras

If previous pages caused hyperacidity, this page can take it out

Stress, a big contributor to Hyperacidity

By KATRINA PRIMAVERA

NO NEWS is good news. Distressing current events may not only cause your blood pressure to shoot up but it may also be a reason for your acids to act up. Stress is but one of the many factors that contribute to hyperacidity. Smoking, physical exertion, irregular eating habits, dramatic weight gain, lying down too soon after a meal and pregnancy hormones are also common causes of a hyperacidity attack. Hyperacidity happens when there is an excessive secretion of acid in the stomach. It is not a disease but rather a collection of symptoms, including discomfort or burning in the upper abdomen which may also cause nausea. For relief from these discomforts, the most common over-the-counter remedy is an antacid.

Different terms and varying degrees of hyperacidity

HYPERACIDITY, locally known as *pangangasim ng sikmura*, is the excessive secretion of hydrochloric acid in the stomach. This imbalance causes a burning sensation or a slight churning in the stomach, which could also involve the esophagus and part of the small intestines.

Peptic ULCERS: refer to actual open sores or "wounds" in the inner lining of the stomach or small intestine or esophagus. Many ulcers result in a gnawing pain in the stomach and are caused by a bacteria called H. pylori. Other causes or factors which may aggravate ulcers include long term use of certain pain relievers, smoking, excessive alcohol consumption and stress. While over-the-counter medications may relieve the pain of ulcers, a doctor should be consulted so that proper treatment directed at healing the ulcer can be started.

INDIGESTION ("dyspepsia"). This is a general term often used to describe a collection of uncomfortable abdominal symptoms which often occur after eating. The cause of indigestion can't be attributed to one particular thing and is often times not serious. This includes discomfort or burning in the upper abdomen, nausea and a bloated feeling that belching may relieve. This can stem from a temporary problem such as overeating or a stressful event rather than relating it to a disease. It is a common disorder of the upper gastrointestinal system which includes the esophagus, stomach and the first part of the small intestine. The proper diet, exercise, stress management and anti-acid medications can all help with the symptoms.

HEARTBURN. When the lower sphincter valve of the esophagus relaxes or is weak, stomach acid can flow back up into the esophagus and irritate the esophagus resulting in "heartburn". The sensation is similar to regurgitation while experiencing a sour taste in the mouth and leaving a burning sensation behind the breastbone. Acid regurgitation or reflux can even cause hoarseness of the voice , coughing, and worsening of asthma.

TREATMENT. For quick acid neutralization, New Mylanta Rolltabs (CALCIUM CARBONATE + MAGNESIUM HYDROXIDE). Mylanta Rolltabs comes in chewable and great tasting flavors to aid in the rapid neutralization of acid to start relief in seconds. It's portable and comes in different flavors giving you sweet relief in no time, anytime. Don't forget to consult your doctor if symptoms persist, are severe, or keep recurring. Some of the things which may aggravate or result in heartburn: Stress, smoking, tight clothing, physical exertion, weight gain, lying down too soon after a meal and pregnancy.

Hyperacidity Tales

" I love coffee. I used to have 7-10 cups a day. Thing is with coffee, I would lose my appetite and end up skipping meals so I would get the worst hyperacidity attacks. I would feel as if there was this big ball burning inside my tummy." -Paul, 25

"Grabe ang hyperacidity ko. Pasulpot sulpot na lang. Para sa akin dumarating na lang yan ng walang warning. May isang beses naglalakad lang ako sa daan tapos may naramdaman akong sakit na biglaan sa tiyan. Ang tindi at ang lakas ng tama, napaupo ako sa daan bigla." -Lawrence, 24

"Ang pinakamatindi kong hyperacidity attack ay nung kumain ako ng manggang hilaw sa umaga. Hindi pa ako nag-aalmusal, so wala pang laman tiyan ko. Ay ang sakit talaga." -Mia, 24

" Hyperacidity is such a hassle. The worst part about it is that you never know when it's gonna hit you. There was this one time I was out with my girl friends and started getting spasms in my stomach. At first, I thought it was just gas or something I ate but the pain got worse as I was having my drinks. So not only did I have to pass up on the drinks, the pain became unbearable so I went home and missed out on what would have been a perfectly good night out." -Karen, 35

"I would get acidic once in a while but for some reason, it's more frequent and more intense during exam week. Things are a little bit more busy at that time. I like to go out kasi. Hanging with the boys and spending time with my girlfriend so tendency is for me to study last minute. I think the cramming and the pressure just aggravates my hyperacidity. Stress, you know?" -Joey 17,

"Hindi ako familiar sa mga sakit na ganyan. Basta iniisip ko lagi, lilipas lang yan. Pero may isang beses na nakaranas ako ng sakit sa tiyan. Ay, kakaiba talaga. Hindi ko siya maipinta. Parang may mainit at mahapding bulateng umiikot sa loob ng tiyan ko. Sinubukan kong itulog pero sa tindi ng sakit, hindi ako makatulog. Akala ko nagkaka-dysmenorrhea na ko , pero sus, hyperacidity pala siya" -Tiffany, 24

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‘Small people are the ones …

From page A1

-tection money from unscrupulous national, local and police officials were so exorbitant under the current administration that jueteng operators needed to rig their draws to satisfy the demands of the corrupt in government.

“The victims here are the jeepney and tricycle drivers, the vendors, the farmers (who bet their money),” he said.

MAYOR: I only hope that the Senate will be able to protect me. JESS YUSON

An innocent past

Mayor knows his numbers well, particularly cash flow principles, having obtained an accounting degree from the Divine Word Christian College in Albay.

He then got administrative experience when he served as an employee at the Bureau of Air Transportation. He also worked in the private sector as a junior examiner with Pacific Banking Corp. until the mid-1980s.

Mayor said he became a licensed contractor in 1986 and still engaged in the business every now and then.

In 1994, he was elected barangay chair of Tagas in Daraga, where his family has a home in St. Mary’s Village.

A year after, he plunged into the underground lottery racket.

P1M for a start

“We’d been planning to go into jueteng as early as 1992,” Mayor said in his Senate testimony.

In response to senators’ questions, Mayor said he and his partners—Tomas Rañola and Luis Maralit—started operating jueteng in Albay in 1995. Eventually, Rañola and Maralit quit, leaving Mayor as the lone jueteng operator in Albay.

“Some think that starting jueteng operations requires a huge amount. But when a place is open and the protection money being asked is relatively small, one can start operations with just P1 million [to pay off officials asking for advance protection money),” he said.

Mayor said there were times when he earned a windfall from his illegal operations but that there were also times when he suffered losses.

“In 1997, we stopped operations because [then Interior Secretary] Robert Barbers was hot on jueteng operations,” he said.

Launching a comeback

“I felt bad that time because I was paying installments for a parcel of land I bought,” he said.

Starting in 1998 until President Joseph Estrada was deposed in 2001, Mayor said he didn’t engage in jueteng.

He said he made his jueteng comeback after President Macapagal-Arroyo came to power as Estrada’s successor.

And he came back strong.

Mayor said he took over the much-bigger operations in Pangasinan in 2001. A year later, he hit Baguio City and Benguet.

Another dream

“I was able to get [new areas] because I offered a larger amount. In Pangasinan, the monthly protection money then was just P300,000. I offered the bagmen P600,000. I got the operations,” Mayor said.

While he would not say he was a big fish in the jueteng pond, Mayor counted alleged jueteng lords, like Melchor Calauag, Rodolfo “Bong” Pineda, Batangas Gov. Armando Sanchez and Romy Lajara, as among his stiff competitors.

There was a time his operations in Albay alone grossed P90 million a month, he said.

On Dec. 15, 2003, however, a different dream lured him. He wanted to be mayor of Daraga.

Old world gone

After losing the election, there was no longer any jueteng operation to return to.

A jueteng bagman’s ledger showed that Pineda had taken over his previous stronghold. Even his former jueteng henchmen had been reportedly displaced by Kapampangans brought in by Pineda, who hails from Lubao, Pampanga.

“I only hope that the Senate will be able to protect me. There are even operators in Bicol who are already angry with me,” Mayor said.

“Among the members of my family, only my son knew that I’d be testifying,” he said.

Testimony mostly hearsay, say senators

By TJ Burgonio

SOME senators yesterday viewed with skepticism the testimony of confessed “jueteng” lord Wilfredo “Boy Bicol” Mayor on the web of corruption attending operations of the illegal numbers game in some parts of the country, but others found it credible.

Mayor testified before the Senate that it was usual for him to pay off governors, congressmen and mayors, through their “bag men,” to allow jueteng in Albay, Pangasinan and Baguio City

He, however, admitted that he had no “hard evidence” to show that the monthly payoffs, amounting to millions of pesos, had ended up in the pockets of these officials.

“As of now he has no personal knowledge, he admitted he was just talking to intermediaries … So everything he’s saying is a conclusion of fact, not a statement of fact,” Senate President Franklin Drilon said.

Majority Floor Leader Francis Pangilinan and Senators Joker Arroyo and Juan Ponce Enrile agreed.

“It’s mostly hearsay so far. I hope that the second hearing will veer away from hearsay toward credible evidence. So far it’s mostly hearsay,” said Pangilinan, who watched the proceedings in his room.

“There is much, much, much to be desired in the testimony. He knew the operation because he was involved, but whether those people that he mentioned received what he claimed he gave by way of payola or bribes is a big question mark,” Enrile said.

Senators Panfilo “Ping” Lacson and Jamby Madrigal found the testimony credible and damning.

“He’s [Mayor] credible enough. His testimony was equally credible. There were details that only a gambling operator, only a credible witness, could have testified to. It’s hard to invent names, places and circumstances,” Lacson said.

For instance, he cited Mayor’s claim that he had managed to take over jueteng operations in Pampanga after agreeing to give a monthly payoff of P600,000 to then Pampanga Vice Gov. Juan Miguel Arroyo through his “bagman,” identified as Arthur “Catoy” Naguit.

Madrigal said she had no reason to doubt the testimony despite Mayor’s admission that he had no personal knowledge of where the payoffs ended up.

“It’s very hard to put a good man down. Definitely, the testimony of Mr. Mayor is very damaging because I believe [Lingayen-Dagupan] Bishop Cruz will not bring to the public someone who is not telling the truth,” she said.

Senate Minority Leader Aquilino Pimentel Jr., for his part, said it was “a good start” and if the testimony would be corroborated by other witnesses, the Senate could build a “circumstantial web of linkage” of personalities to jueteng.

“Taken by itself, the testimony … may not suffice, but connected with other testimonies about which he speaks of, they can create a web of circumstantial evidence to link people to this juetengate,” he said.

Drilon, Pimentel and Sen. Manuel Villar Jr. said the “bagmen” mentioned by Mayor should be summoned to the next hearing so they could shed light on his testimony.

Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago said the value of Mayor’s testimony lay “in the light that it shed on the issue of whether we should legalize jueteng or not.”

“According to him, it is very easy to eradicate jueteng. And since the main basis for advocacy of legalization is that it is possible to eradicate, then that is a very significant observation from the field that currently it can be done with sufficient political will,” she said.

Gov’t hospital officials …

From page A1

said: “I would not totally rule out the possibility that some of these cases were happening.”

But Leonardo and De la Paz said the hospital never tolerated doctors and nurses who would give patients a tongue-lashing, even if the staff members were understandably “overworked and underpaid.”

Never an excuse

“That’s never an excuse,” Leonardo said. “We always inculcate in them the value of health care and service.”

In spite of an insufficient budget, Fabella handles as many as 80 obstetric cases daily, according to De la Paz, a member of the obstetrics-gynecology staff.

One of the sources said the hospital dealt with as many as 15 pregnant mothers in labor at any given time during the “peak season,” which is usually in September.

“Still, we never use this as a justification,” De la Paz said. “We never allow our people to mistreat patients even if sometimes it is [no longer] humanly impossible to accommodate so many patients at a given time.”

The sources said they had witnessed mothers in labor being berated by some doctors and nurses, allegedly insisting that these “perennially pregnant” women should resort to artificial birth control methods.

Some residents may have lashed out at patients, because of sheer exhaustion and ignorance of proper bedside manners, according to De la Paz.

New trainees

“You have to understand that some of them may just be first-year [trainees] and they still don’t know proper decorum,” she reasoned out. “Still, it’s not an excuse.”

De la Paz said the hospital was now looking into the reported verbal abuse committed by members of the hospital staff.

She said she and her colleagues were particularly concerned about the purported case of one male doctor who removed a pregnant woman’s uterus after delivery without her consent.

The doctor allegedly did so to make sure that the mother, who had just delivered her sixth baby, would not become pregnant again, according to one of the sources.

“We’re very concerned,” De la Paz said.

She said the hospital would have to gather more evidence so it could impose disciplinary action on this particular doctor. She said those who had verbally abused patients would also be disciplined.

The former nursing trainee said he had witnessed another doctor performing dilation and curettage or *raspa* on a pregnant entertainer in her 20s. He said the woman simply wanted to get rid of the baby because she had a job waiting in Japan.

Asked about these cases, Leonardo said the hospital was “trying to maintain a certain standard.”

“We follow certain protocols and we try to give our patients the best care,” he said.

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Dichavez owned bank account, says Pimentel

By Nelson F. Flores

SENATE Minority Leader Aquilino Pimentel Jr. yesterday testified in the Sandiganbayan that the controversial Jose Velarde bank account was owned not by deposed President Joseph Estrada but by businessman Jaime Dichavez.

Pimentel, the 39th defense witness, told the special division hearing the multimillion-peso plunder case against Estrada that the contents of the second envelope that was not opened during the Senate impeachment trial of the former president showed that Dichavez owned the Velarde account.

Pimentel said the envelope contained a 21-page document, including a letter signed by Dichavez to Equitable Bank senior vice president Romuald Dy-Tang.

Dichavez, in the letter dated Aug. 25, 1999, directed Dy-Tang to open two bank accounts under the name Jose Velarde in the Juan Luna, Binondo, branch of Equitable Bank and to transact all businesses under the account name with him.

The letter was deposited with Senate Secretary Lutgardo Barbo on Jan. 16, 2001, immediately after the impeachment trial was stopped following the walkout of the private prosecutors.

The walkout was prompted by the 11-10 vote by the senators against the opening of the envelope. The vote led Pimentel to resign as Senate President.

Pimentel, who co-presided over Estrada's impeachment trial with Justice Hilario Davide, said he came to know about the contents of the second envelope only on Feb. 14, 2001, when as Senate President he ordered its opening.

Prior to that, he said he "thought Dichavez was trying to muddle the issue."

When asked if he believed that Dichavez owned the Velarde account, Pimentel said, "The document speaks for itself."

Japanese pulling out of search

By Aquiles Z. Zonio
PDI Mindanao Bureau

GENERAL SANTOS CITY—Japan withdrew its diplomats here yesterday after four days of unsuccessfully trying to verify reports that two surviving Japanese soldiers had been hiding in Mindanao since the end of World War II.

"The Japanese Embassy in the Philippines has decided that the embassy staff that has been sent to General Santos City will be recalled to Manila for the time being," said Akio Egawa, the Japanese consul general.

Egawa said the decision to withdraw was made after a shadowy Japanese mediator, allegedly in touch with the two soldiers, had told the diplomats that any interviews of the two should be done "at a later date, at a more quiet place."

Egawa also cited security concerns that the scores of Japanese and local journalists who came to this southern city to cover the event might be targeted by guerrillas and kidnapping gangs operating in the hills outside the city.

He refused to disclose further details on the mysterious mediator except to say they would still be in contact with him from the embassy in Manila.

Egawa also would not say if they were questioning the credibility of the story or the middleman, remarking that "we will be waiting for further contacts from the mediator."

Suspicious mediator

In Japan, Chief Cabinet Secretary Hiroyuki Hosoda had said that "if we see no progress, we are considering sending our diplomats back to Manila."

The self-described Japanese middleman met with the diplomats in Mindanao on Sunday but was not accompanied by the two purported strangers. Instead, he offered to arrange a meeting with them.

Japanese broadcaster NHK said the middleman's statements were often contradictory and ambiguous.

"We cannot look for them in large mountain areas that are controlled by guerrillas. We just have to wait for a new contact" from the middleman, Hosoda said.

Ransom demand

Japan's Mainichi Shimbun newspaper said Sunday that unidentified Philippine rebels were demanding $232,000 in ransom for delivering the Japanese soldiers. But Hosoda said yesterday he was not aware of such a thing.

The diplomats, along with about 100 Japanese journalists, descended on this city after the Japanese Embassy received information Thursday that two men living on the island were believed to be ex-World War II soldiers.

General Santos City Mayor Pedro Acharon Jr. and South Cotabato Gov. Daisy Fuentes told the INQUIRER that the diplomats did not seek the local government's help in tracking down the Japanese stragglers.

But Acharon said he ordered the police to tighten security, especially in areas where the foreigners were billeted.

The Japanese diplomats coordinated with local authorities only on security matters.

Story untrue

Supt. Robert Kiunisula, regional deputy police intelligence chief based in this city, said the Japanese probably decided to pull out because they discovered the story was not true.

Newspaper reports that unidentified rebels were asking for money for the two Japanese soldiers was a sign the whole thing could be simply a "money-making scheme," warned Kiunisula. *With AFP, AP*

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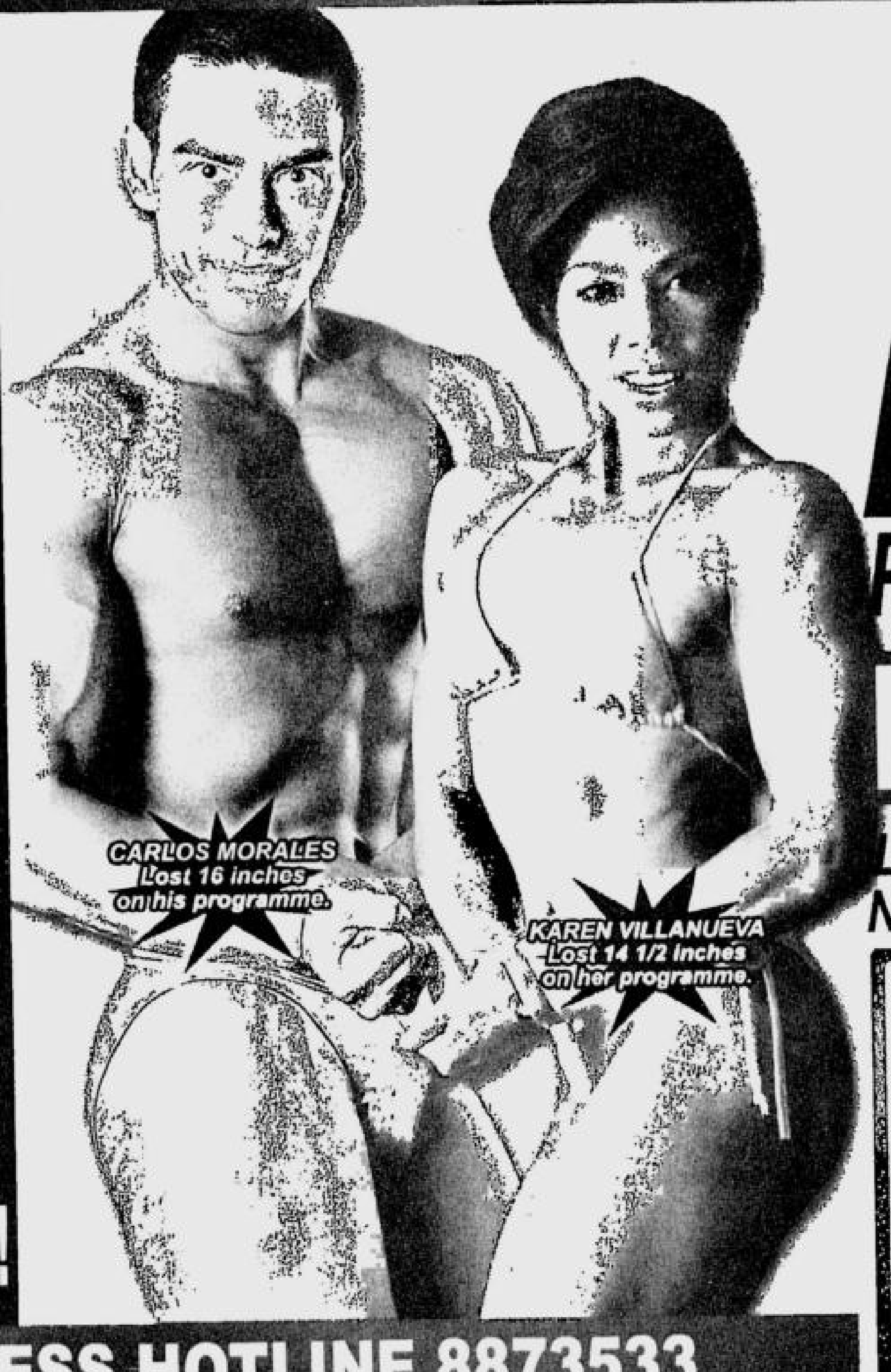
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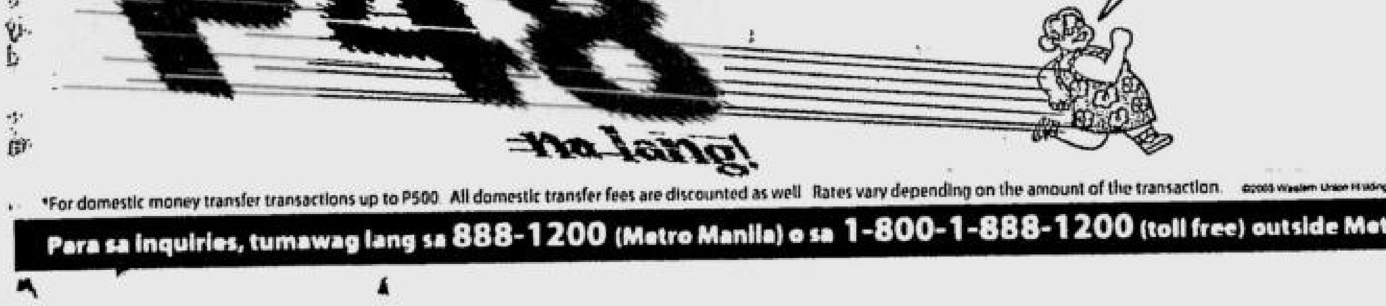
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4 killed in plane crash

By Nikko Dizon

A TWIN-ENGINE Bonanza BE-50C aircraft crashed yesterday morning shortly after taking off from the Cuyo Airport in Palawan, killing all four people on board, including the pilot.

The Air Transportation Office (ATO) identified the fatalities as Capt. Eddax Agraviador, the pilot, Ron San Diego, a passenger, and Victor Suico and Harry Colegado, the plane's mechanics.

The plane with tail No. RP C364 and owned by Royal Air Charter was bound for Manila.

It took off at 11:20 a.m. and crashed in a coconut plantation seconds later, according to Assistant Secretary Nilo Jatico, ATO chief.

Jatico said the eight-seater plane was among those that were grounded for inspection following the crash of a Cessna plane on May 17 in Morong, Rizal, that killed its pilot.

Last Friday, the Bonanza was inspected for airworthiness at the ATO hangar in Manila and was cleared for flying, Jatico said.

It left Manila for Palawan on Saturday.

Senior Supt. Victor Caragan, operations chief of the Philippine National Police Mimaropa office, citing field office reports, said the plane's scheduled flight to Manila last weekend was suspended after it experienced engine trouble.

Caragan said the plane's mechanics Colegado and Suico spent all day Sunday repairing the plane's engines.

"Our initial investigation revealed that just minutes after takeoff, one of the plane's engines died. Then it fell," Caragan told the INQUIRER in Filipino.

He said the plane was used to transport live fish from Cuyo to Manila.

ATO aviation safety investigators were dispatched to the crash site to determine the cause of the accident, Jatico said.

This was the sixth general aviation aircraft to crash this year, he added.

Five of the crashes, including yesterday's, happened in May while another occurred in March. A total of 11 people were killed in the May crashes alone. There were five survivors.

Jatico told the INQUIRER yesterday that following the consecutive crashes, the ATO has begun monitoring all general aviation aircraft to get to "the root of this matter."

"We are doubling our efforts. That's all we can do," Jatico said.

With Marlon Ramos, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

FOR A FREE BURMA

Fr. Robert Reyes leads cyclists from the Welcome Rotonda in Quezon City to Mendiola Bridge in Manila in a "Bike for Burma (Myanmar) Protest" sponsored by Free Burma Coalition-Philippines to commemorate the May 30, 2003, "Depayin Massacre" in Northern Burma where scores of political activists were killed and wounded. REM ZAMORA

Get Early Screening for Lung Cancer at St. Luke's

Early Detection Saves Lives

The World Health Organization (WHO) annually sponsors the "*World No-Tobacco Day*" on May 31 to call attention to the seriousness of the impact of tobacco on health. First held in 1988 the event emphasizes a spirit of worldwide cooperation to reduce tobacco-related deaths.

WHO relies on efforts from government and private sectors worldwide, to increase public awareness and action in the fight against the "tobacco disease epidemic" which claimed almost 5 million lives (one in ten adults) last year around the world. If current smoking patterns continue, it will cause some 10 million deaths each year by 2020. Half the people that smoke today -that is about 650 million people-will eventually be killed by tobacco.

The greatest risk factor for developing lung cancer is the smoking of cigarettes and related tobacco products - 87 percent of lung cancers are smoking related.

In the Philippines, lung cancer is the number one cause of cancer deaths among men, and the third most common cancer among women.

The best hope for curing lung cancer is finding it as early as possible. St. Luke's Medical Center offers low dose CT lung cancer screening for individuals at risk smokers as well as non-smokers. The low-dose CT scan takes high resolution pictures of the lungs, allowing detection of abnormal spots called 'nodules' within the lungs. These nodules are usually too small to be seen on regular chest x-ray. Recent research shows that patients at high risk for lung cancer who underwent low-dose CT screening had lung cancers diagnosed at an earlier stage and smaller size than if no screening test were used.

The CT screening test is a quick 20-second scan of your chest and lungs. The CT machine is shaped like a donut, with a table that quickly slides you in and out of the donut. No injections or medications are needed, unless further chest CT is required.

Initial screening results of the International Early Lung Cancer Action Project (I-ELCAP), a worldwide study group led by the New York-Presbyterian/Weill Cornell Medical College of Cornell University, found that eighty percent of the lung cancers identified by low dose screening CT were Stage 1A (the most curable, best long-term survival stage). **St. Luke's Medical Center** is the *only* participating member from the Philippines in this study group.

Lung cancer tumors typically are about the size of an orange by the time they're discovered. In contrast, most of the lesions detected on low dose CT were no bigger than a grain of rice. The most current data of I-ELCAP states that the current five-year survival rate for lung cancer is only 14 percent. But that could soar to 80 percent if all smokers and ex-smokers received annual CT exams and early treatment. The low-dose CT used for screening requires less than 20 seconds of scanning time and entails only slightly more radiation than a standard chest x-ray, but still below the dose limits set for radiation safety.

In a separate study by the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minnesota, research data shows that lung cancer screening could be the impetus to help some cigarette smokers quit. One year after undergoing low dose lung cancer screening, 14 percent of smokers in the study had stopped smoking. That quit rate is double what researchers would expect to see in a community sample of smokers. Investigators said that results indicate that people who participated in cancer screening were motivated to quit smoking, further stating that cancer screening may present a 'teachable moment'. The Mayo Clinic further showed that participants with scans that showed no signs of cancer quit smoking at the about the same rate as those who had abnormal scans that required follow-up testing.

You may be at risk if you are or have been a smoker, have a family history of cancer, have been previously diagnosed with or treated for tuberculosis (TB), or 60 years old and older.

World No-Tobacco Day is another reminder to help yourself, your friends and your loved ones to live a healthier life free from tobacco addiction. To discuss lung cancer screening or for more information about low dose CT screening for lung cancer, call your St. Luke's physician or the St. Luke's Wellness Center at 723-1206 or 723-0101 local 5527/5528.

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Lung cancer is the No. 1 cause of cancer death in Filipino men and the third most common cancer in Filipino women. The main cause of this deadly disease is cigarette smoking. But even if you don't smoke, studies have found that you are still at high risk for lung cancer if you are often exposed to secondhand smoke.

The good news is that lung cancer can be treated successfully. The key is to detect the disease while still in its early stages. This is now possible with Low-Dose CT Lung Cancer Screening, which is available at St. Luke's Medical Center.

Low-Dose CT Lung Cancer Screening involves a quick scan of your chest and lungs to reveal abnormalities not seen using conventional chest x-ray. As its name implies, the procedure is conducted using a low level of CT radiation dose. The screening test effectively detects lung cancer before it can spread to other parts of the body and becomes difficult to treat.

St. Luke's Medical Center is committed to provide patients with the tools that would give them much higher chances of survival. With the Low-Dose CT Lung Cancer Screening, lung cancer would hopefully cease to be the country's main cause of cancer death in the near future.

THE FINE PRINT: Some nodules will require repeat chest CTs over a 2 year period. The detection of abnormalities or nodules may cause considerable anxiety. Further diagnostics or assessments are necessary to determine if the lesions are benign or cancerous. However, the advantage of early detection far outweighs late diagnosis and death.

St. Luke's Medical Center is the only participating member from the Philippines in the International Early Lung Cancer Action Program (I-ELCAP), a worldwide study group led by New York-Presbyterian / Weill Cornell Medical College of Cornell University.

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More college dropouts seen

By Alcuin Papa

POOR students who are leaving private colleges and universities in droves for more affordable state institutions may find it hard to get into the cheaper schools because these are already overcrowded.

Because of this, the militant youth group Anak ng Bayan Youth Party said yesterday that college students hoping to enroll in state universities and colleges (SUCs) may have no choice but to drop out of school this year.

Raymond Palatino, party vice president, said there were not enough SUCs to handle the number of transferees from private higher education institutions (HEIs). In addition, Palatino said, enrollment slots in SUCs were limited and these schools were also raising their tuition and other fees.

As a result, Palatino predicted an increase in the number of college dropouts and out-of-school youth over the next few years.

"Access to public HEIs, the last resort for students who want to obtain a college degree, has become impossible for many college hopefuls. While it is true that SUCs offer lower tuition [compared to] private schools, educational expenditures in state schools and universities have seen the biggest increases in recent years, thus making them also inaccessible to ordinary students," he said.

Already, Palatino said, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (Unesco) National Commission of the Philippines reported a measly 22 percent overall student survival rate from the first to the fourth year of college. In June 2004, the Wallace Report revealed that the college dropout rate was at a staggering all-time high of 73 percent.

The situation is aggravated by the low priority that government places on state education as manifested by the constant reduction in the education budget and the reduction in the number of public tertiary schools in the country, Palatino said. From 271 in 1996, the number of schools in the college level was down to 173 by 2002.

Palatino also said SUCs were forced to accept a limited number of students due to financial constraints.

Last year, the University of the Philippines Office of Admissions said some 64,000 high school graduates all over the country applied to take the UP College Admission Test, with 40,000 of them wanting to enter UP Diliman alone, the university's flagship campus. Only about 11,000 applicants are admitted to UP each year.

The same goes for the Polytechnic University of the Philippines where about 50,000 to 80,000 students take the PUP College Entrance Test, but only 10,000 are admitted.

In recent years, Palatino said tuition and miscellaneous fees at SUCs had risen with the adoption of a tuition scheme similar to the Socialized Tuition Fee Adjustment Program implemented at UP in 1989.

Under the program, tuition at UP shot up by nearly 300 percent, from P11 to P300 per unit today. This scheme is also being implemented in public technical and vocational schools in the country.

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6 Sinos turn out to be illegals

THE CLAIM of six Chinese nationals that they were innocent of drug charges was not enough to get them off the hook after their alibi that they were running a hardware store was found to be a violation of immigration laws.

The six are detained at the Bureau of Immigration and face deportation for allegedly working illegally and overstaying in the Philippines.

BI prosecutor Jake Licas said the Chinese's claim that they were running a hardware made them liable for working without the proper permits.

They were also found to be overstaying since 2001, which is grounds for their summary deportation, Licas said.

The six were identified as William Chua, Henry Tan, Tyson Lu, Joseph Tan, Wang Fen Lin and Johnny Chua.

They were arrested on May 24 in a raid of their rented house at Barangay Parada, Valenzuela City, according to Immigration Commissioner Alipio Fernandez Jr.

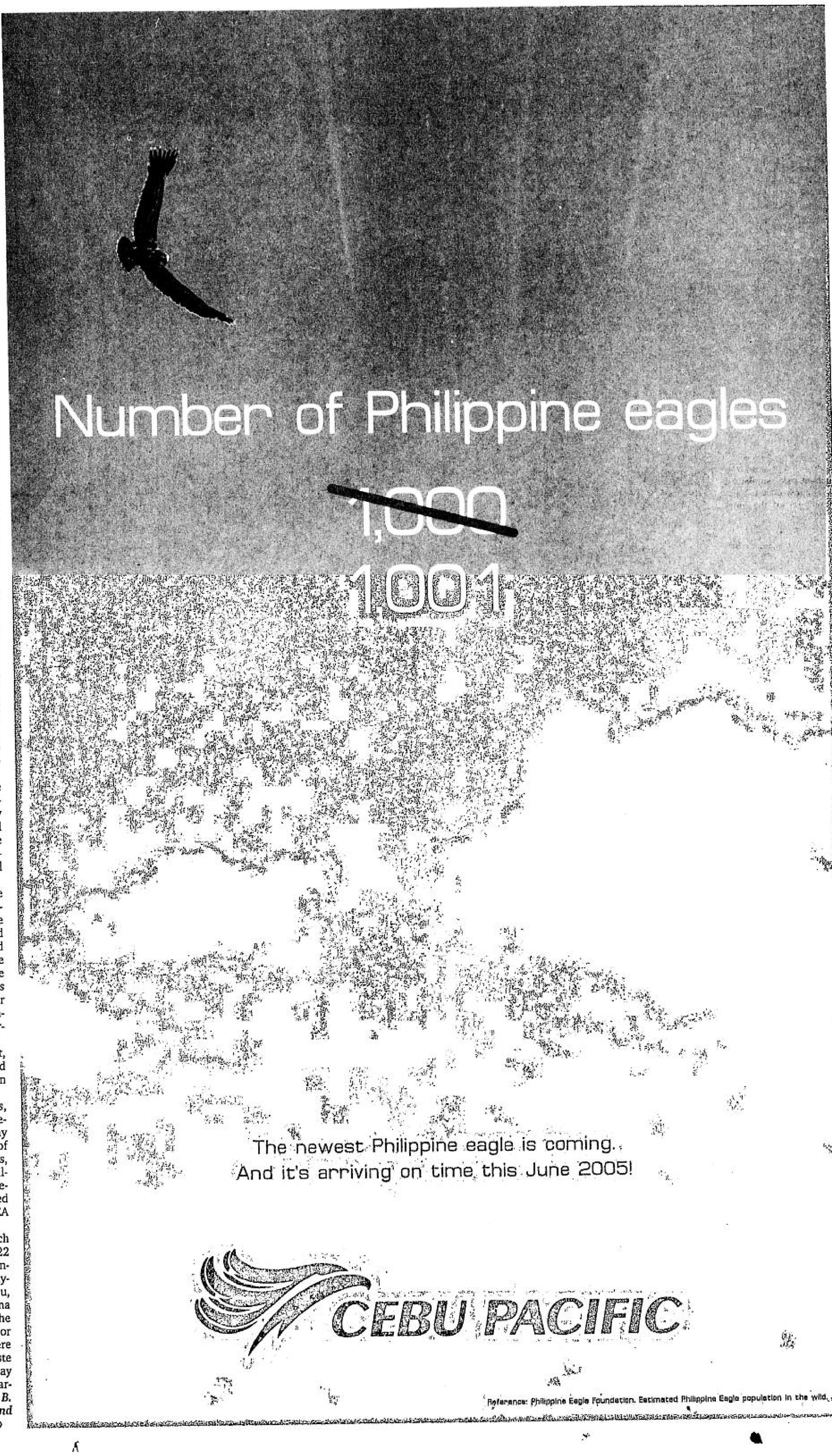
Agents of the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency conducted the raid on suspicion that the Chinese were involved in illegal drugs.

Seized during the raid were fake hardware items that the foreigners claimed had been imported from China. The PDEA claimed the hardware business was just a front for the Chinese nationals' illegal drug operation.

After their arrest, the Chinese denied they were involved in illegal drugs.

The authorities, meanwhile, destroyed yesterday some P2.4 billion of dangerous drugs, bringing to P15.7 billion the value of illegal drugs destroyed since 2002, the PDEA said.

The drugs – which included some 422 kilos of methamphetamine hydrochloride or shabu, 29 kilos of marijuana and 1,053 kilos of the shabu precursor ephedrine – were burned at a waste plant in Barangay Aguado in Trece Martirez City. *Leila B. Salaverria and Luige A. del Puerto*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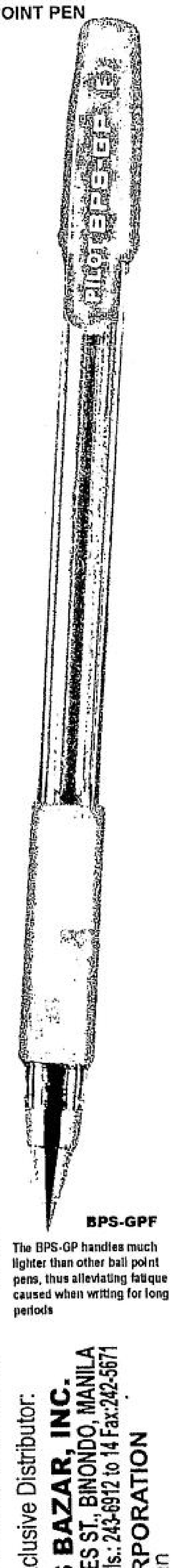

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Albay solons, Batangas gov deny 'jueteng' raps

OFFICIALS implicated by "jueteng" whistle-blower Wilfredo Mayor at the start of a Senate inquiry angrily denied yesterday they had received payoffs from illegal numbers game operators.

"I don't know it. I deny it," was the simple reaction, via a text message, of Albay Rep. Joey Salceda (3rd dist.).

The INQUIRER tried to contact former Albay Rep. Krisel Lagman-Luistro (first district), but her father Rep. Edcel Lagman said she was in the United States pursuing higher studies on a Fulbright scholarship.

"I have already come out in the open to pledge my cooperation in the ongoing investigation, although I am convinced that it is a politically motivated witch-hunt being instigated by those with an ax to grind against the present administration," said Batangas Gov. Armando Sanchez in a statement.

The governor lambasted Senate Minority Leader Aquilino Pimentel Jr. for insinuating that some local officials linked to jueteng, like Sanchez, were now planning to leave the country "to give the issue time to cool off."

Presumption of innocence

On Saturday, Pimentel asked Interior Secretary Angelo Reyes not to allow local officials implicated in the jueteng scandal to go abroad.

"I presume that Senator Pimentel, who has a reputation as a freedom fighter, knows all about the presumption of innocence and the right to travel, which are both enshrined in the Bill of Rights of the Constitution," said Ferdinand Topacio, Sanchez's legal counsel.

Topacio said it was frustrating for Pimentel "to suggest that a citizen, against whom not a single iota of evidence has been presented, should be denied the same rights that he fought hard for during martial law."

Sanchez admitted that he would be leaving for Japan in the first week of June. He said his trip was sponsored by the Regional Development Council of the Calabarzon region and the Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry and was scheduled as early as four months ago.

He said the cancellation of his trip would cause the country international embarrassment and grave consequences for his constituents.

"I am not afraid to face Senator Pimentel, the committee on games and amusement, and any of those accusing me of any illegal activity, anytime, anywhere. I have done nothing wrong, and I have nothing to hide," Sanchez said. *Marlon Ramos and Job B. Belen, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

Witness tags Mikey in 'jueteng' payola

From page A1

volvement—which he said was the reason he chose to testify in the Senate investigation.

A record number of senators—15—attended the first hearing.

Jubilant Reyes

Seated a few chairs away from Mayor, Interior Secretary Angelo Reyes smiled and raised a fist in jubilation after Mayor declared that an alleged P180,000 monthly payola for the Department of Interior and Local Government was not intended for Reyes.

But Mayor, again quoting bagmen, broadly insinuated that Lomibao was a jueteng protector in Baguio and Benguet when the PNP chief was police director for Region 1 (Ilocos).

Mayor said he talked with Lomibao in the latter's house in Pangasinan in an alleged getting-to-know meeting arranged by jueteng intermediaries but they did not discuss the issue of illegal gambling.

Lomibao said he could not recall such a meeting. PNP spokesperson Senior Supt. Leopoldo Bataoil denied his boss was on the take.

Mayor also alleged that Batangas Gov. Armand Sanchez was one of the biggest jueteng lords in the country. Sanchez has denied the charge. *(See story on this page.)*

Mayor was the first of eight witnesses whom Archbishop Oscar Cruz had said he would present at the joint hearings of the Senate committees on public order and games, chaired by Senators Manuel Villar and Manuel "Lito" Lapid, respectively.

Code name is 'Anak'

Wearing a gray and white Lacoste polo shirt and blue pants, the lanky Mayor negotiated a witness protection guarantee for him and his family before he started firing off the names on his list. Mayor was one of three men who spoke to the INQUIRER about two weeks ago about alleged jueteng protectors and beneficiaries.

Mayor said that when he operated jueteng in Pangasinan in 2001 and Baguio in 2002, he was approached by a certain Arthur Nagit, alias Catoy, who told him he had to give protection money to "Anak."

He said "Anak" was the code name of Mikey Arroyo.

"*Siya po ang* bagman *ng kinagagalangan po natin na anak ng Presidente* (He was the bagman of the respected son of the President)," Mayor said of Catoy.

Never met Mikey

"He (Catoy) came to me and he collected from me P600,000 a month," Mayor said.

He said Catoy was a former vice mayor of a municipality in Pampanga, the home province of the President.

But Mayor took pains to point out that he had never met Mikey Arroyo.

"The only one I talked to was Catoy, to whom I gave P600,000 a month from Baguio [jueteng operations]," he said.

Mayor said he met personally with Luga, then PNP regional director in Caraga.

"I personally talked to General Victor Luga in his office. I told him that I will set up a jueteng business in [Baguio City and Benguet]," Mayor said.

Sen. Panfilo Lacson, who later described the witness as "highly credible," asked why he would give money to Mikey Arroyo when he was operating in Baguio City. *(See related story on Page A4.)*

Meeting at hotels

"That's what they told me, that I had to give to him," Mayor said.

He said it was at a meeting at Hotel Rembrandt in Quezon City that he was told by Catoy about the money for Mikey. He said Catoy was with two companions—Leo Katigbak and Rene Maglangque.

Mayor said he asked how much was previously given and Catoy replied P300,000 a month.

"I said I will just double the amount for as long as they remove my competitor," Mayor said, identifying the competitor as Melchor "Ngongo" Calauag.

Mayor said Catoy told him to say he was only giving P500,000 a month. "The P100,000 is for me," he quoted Catoy as saying.

Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago asked if he believed the allegation against Mikey considering that he himself admitted he never met the President's son.

"I told them to remove my opponent and they did remove him," Mayor said.

Always in cash

He said the payola for operatives at Camp Crame given to a certain Boy Tangkad was sometimes delivered to the Rembrandt, Manila or Heritage hotels or sometimes deposited in bank accounts.

But he said the alleged payola intended for Mikey was always in cash.

"They are very careful, they always want it in cash," Mayor said.

In Albay, he said, "whoever were the incumbent officials were the protectors." He said all representatives in the three congressional districts of the province received payola during his time.

Mayor said Lagman, daughter of Rep. Edcel Lagman, supposedly received P250,000 a month through a bagman, a certain Caloy; Imperial, P300,000 a month through SPO1 Charlie Yasos, and Salceda, a former economics adviser of the President, P400,000 a month through a certain Jojie.

Sharing the payoffs

He said then Albay Gov. Al Francis Bichara was not on the take.

He alleged that mayors got 7 percent of the collections in their areas and one percent of that went to the police chiefs. He said jueteng collections in Legazpi City reached P800,000 a day, and for the whole province up to P3 million a day.

Mayor said he never met the supposed protectors but that his administrator and a certain Lito Millora arranged a meeting between him and the regional PNP director.

"They told me that they can bring me to the protectors to prove to me that they are really the protectors of our jueteng game. They said they will bring me to the regional director then in Region 1. The director at that time was Chief PNP General Lomibao," Mayor said.

Never met him

"They brought me to the house of General Lomibao in Pangasinan but when we talked, we did not talk about jueteng, but after a few days we were able to operate," Mayor said.

Lomibao, in reply, told the senators: "I do not recall having met the witness, your honor."

He said the Pangasinan house was his parents' and that whenever he went there, he was just like any politician who talked to the people.

Mayor said the regional command got P400,000 a week, while P200,000 a week was given for the provincial command, P200,000 a month for Camp Crame, P200,000 a month for the media in Manila, P883,500 a month for local media, the NBI in Manila got P148,000 a month, the intelligence group in Crame P120,000 a month, and DILG operatives, P180,000 a month.

Mayor said the payola for Camp Crame was received from him by Gener David, alias Boy Tangkad, at the three hotels.

"Sometimes I gave it to his account in the bank, sometimes he wanted it in cash," he said.

He said Boy Tangkad asked for cash when the jueteng issue had become hot and when the antimoney laundering law was enacted.

Mayor also said Governor Sanchez sought a meeting with him at the Heritage Hotel in Manila, but he could not go to Manila so they talked over the phone.

"Can you help me there because I want to operate in Albay?" he quoted Sanchez as saying.

Mayor repeatedly stressed that he had no evidence directly linking the President's son and others he named because he said they never transacted in person but through bagmen or intermediaries.

Won't stand in court

But he said the fact that he was able to freely operate in the areas where he paid protection money was enough proof. He conceded, however, this could not stand in court.

"In gambling, we operate by word of honor," he said.

Mayor said he normally asked for a five-day "dry run" after sealing an agreement on jueteng protection money. He said the fact that he and his men were not arrested or stopped during the five-day dry run and afterwards proved that they had really bought protection.

Mayor claimed some of the police raids on jueteng dens were like "a vaudeville" show staged "because people from ABS-CBN [television network] were coming."

Fears for family

He also contended that some of the names on a supposed police list of people arrested were actually names of "people already in the cemetery."

Before making his revelations, Mayor expressed to senators his fears for his and his family's security, not just from prosecution but from physical harm.

"Just one mistake and I'm sure my family and I will be finished," Mayor said.

Salceda dismissed Mayor's accusation that he had received jueteng payola through a certain "Jojie."

"I don't know that. I deny that," he said in a text message.

Lagman denial

Rep. Edcel Lagman, speaking in behalf of his daughter, said Mayor's claim was a "complete canard."

"This is utterly false, baseless and malevolently orchestrated. This is too much. It pains me because my daughter is my soft spot," he said.

"(She) absolutely denied this accusation when I called her at about 3 p.m. She said she does not even know a certain self-confessed jueteng operator 'Mayor' or the alleged collector or bagman by the name of 'Caloy,'" he said.

Lagman said his daughter had been in the United States for the last 10 months and had just finished a special post-graduate course on public health policies at Emory University in Atlanta, Georgia, under a Fulbright scholarship.

He said he had campaigned against jueteng and that his daughter pursued this vigorously during her two terms from 1998 to 2004.

Mikey pals deny bagman role

TWO FRIENDS of Pampanga Rep. Mikey Arroyo yesterday denied allegations that they acted as bagmen for the President's son.

Civil Engineer Rene Maglanque, 39, and stockbroker Leo Katigbak, 33, said they did not know confessed "jueteng" operator Wilfredo "Boy" Mayor, and that their names were being dragged into the jueteng controversy to destroy Arroyo's reputation.

"I have nothing to do with jueteng. I never met that guy [Mayor]. This was the first time that I heard his name," Maglanque said.

"Because he's my friend and I'm Kapampangan, my name is being dragged to destroy the reputation of Congressman Arroyo and that of the government," he added.

For his part, Katigbak said he got to know Arroyo since they both lived in La Vista Subdivision in Quezon City. He also denied being Arroyo's bagman.

"You know, I was just caught completely by surprise when I heard about this. When I heard about this, I was stunned. I have absolutely no knowledge on anything about this issue," Katigbak said.

He appealed to Arroyo's critics not to drag his name into the controversy, adding that he was innocent.

"In my profession, if your name is destroyed, that's it. Your whole career goes down the drain," Katigbak said. *Philip Tubeza*

3 police execs sacked over 'jueteng'

THE PHILIPPINE National Police yesterday sacked three police officials because of persistent reports of "jueteng" operations in their areas.

PNP Director General Arturo Lomibao relieved Senior Supt. Arnold Revilla, chief of the Sorsogon provincial police; Supt. Saadra Gani, chief of Sorsogon town, and Chief Insp. Cerilo Trilles Jr., chief of Bato, Camarines Sur.

Revilla was replaced by Supt. Federico Bonos Serrano and Gani by Chief Insp. Nelly Agra Jazmin. Insp. Macedonio Mota replaced Trilles.

In a statement, the PNP said it had arrested close to 1,200 persons in its anti-jueteng campaign from March 16 to May 30.

It said 753 operations had been conducted and 484 cases filed in court during the period.

Luige A. del Puerto

GMA slams opposition over smear campaign

From page A1

She said those charges should be answered "if we are to clear the air and move on."

Ms Arroyo refused to answer reporters' questions on whether she would encourage her husband to face investigators, saying she had "nothing more to elaborate."

Asked whether her accusation against the opposition meant a change in the relationship between the administration and the opposition, the President said this should not be the case, especially as she goes into the second stage of her economic program.

Guard against innuendo

"I think it's very important as we do implementation to have one Philippines, a united country," Ms Arroyo said. "And, therefore, it's important to point out that for too long, we'd been having two Philippines: One that is about what's good about our country and the one that is not good; one that seeks to build and the other one that seeks to destroy."

In Malacañang, Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye did not hold a news briefing yesterday but issued a statement almost two hours into the Senate inquiry.

Bunye said the administration hoped the investigation would shed light on the controversy. He also said "care should be taken against character assassination by innuendo."

Malacañang supports the Senate and House inquiries into jueteng and "hopes they will lead to more effective enforcement and prevention of gambling," said Bunye.

"This is a serious issue of moral and social values," he said, adding that the campaign against illegal gambling "will continue without letup." *With a report from Christine O. Avendaño*

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo and her brother-in-law, Rep. Ignacio "Iggy" Arroyo, attend the inauguration of the public market in Escalante City in Negros Occidental.

EDWIN BACASMAS

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Tuesday, May 31, 2005
Feast of the Visitation

1st Reading: Zep 3:14-18
Gospel: Luke 1:39-56

Mary then set out for a town in the Hills of Judah. She entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the baby leapt in her womb. Elizabeth was filled with holy spirit, and giving a loud cry, said, "You are most blessed among women and blessed is the fruit of your womb! How is it that the mother of my Lord comes to me? The moment your greeting sounded in my ears, the baby within me suddenly leapt for joy. Blessed are you who believed that the Lord's word would come true!" And Mary said:

"My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord, my spirit exults in God my savior!

He has looked upon his servant in her lowliness, and people forever will call me blessed.

The Mighty One has done great things for me, Holy is his Name!

From age to age his mercy extends to those who live in his presence.

He has acted with power and done wonders, and scattered the proud with their plans.

He has put down the mighty from their thrones and lifted up those who are downtrodden.

He has filled the hungry with good things but has sent the rich away empty.

He held out his hand to Israel, his servant, for he remembered his mercy, even as he promised our fathers, Abraham and his descendants forever."

Mary remained with Elizabeth about three months and then returned home.

Commentary

Here in late spring, we spring forward to the secret ways of God coming to earth in the Incarnation and moving into the world that all will celebrate seven months from now. Mary has been visited by Gabriel and said Yes and is pregnant with the Word of God made flesh. Now she goes to visit her cousin Elizabeth needing protection as a single, unmarried woman in a society that would have stoned her and her child to death. She needs Elizabeth's sanctuary and knowledge and will be one of her midwives when she births John. She greets Elizabeth: Shalom, Peace be with you! And the sound of the word of God stirs John into life and stirs Elizabeth to prophecy and blessing of Mary. The Word is moving out into the world and the poor, the cursed, the remnant of believers even among Israel are the only ones to pick up on its presence growing in Mary. Mary is blessed by Elizabeth and she in turn blesses God. The Word is seeded in us in baptism and we are to go forth to greet others with the Peace that grows with us and to confirm one another in obedience as Elizabeth confirms Mary in her becoming a disciple of the Word.

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Metro Manila workers get P25 daily wage increase

By Jerome Aning

METRO Manila workers will receive a P25 increase in their basic pay effective June 16, the Department of Labor and Employment announced yesterday.

DOLE National Capital Region Director Ricardo Martinez, who also sits as the chair of the NCR wage board, said Metro Manila workers would now get a daily basic pay of P275 – an increase of 10 percent – in addition to the P50 emergency cost-of-living allowance (COLA) that they are currently receiving.

The National Wages and Productivity Commission, meanwhile, announced wage increases in other regions yesterday.

NWPC Executive Director Ciriaco Lagunzad III said Bicol workers would receive a P15 COLA increase, while those in the Eastern Visayas would have their P11 COLA integrated into their basic pay and would get another P11 COLA.

Installment

In Region IV-B or Mimaropa, workers will get P20 more in basic pay to be given in two installments.

On Friday, the Regional Tripartite Wages and Productivity Boards in Central Luzon and the Cordilleras increased the COLA in those areas by P20. In Central Visayas, the RTWPB raised the basic pay by P15 in Metro Cebu and P12 in the rest of the region.

As expected, militant workers were displeased with the amounts of increase of their COLAs, saying this was not enough to cope with the high cost of living.

The Kilusang Mayo Uno called the COLA hikes "worthless," while the fisherfolk group Pamalakaya described them as "trivial."

"It is not enough, it's actually an insult to the workers' fight for substantial wages. How can the government expect workers to cope with the upcoming fare hikes, power rate increase and the effects of additional value-added taxes on the prices of basic goods and services?" KMU chair Elmer Labog said.

Protest

Pamalakaya national chair Fernando Hicap urged various labor groups to stage a massive "across-the-nation work protest" in response to what he termed was "the unholy alliance" between the President, the labor department, wage boards and big business groups.

"This is far from our demand and our needs, especially with the increasing cost of goods and public utilities as P20 is not even enough for a kilo of rice," Hicap said.

"The increase in COLA is not a wage increase, but an economic and political polemic expressed in a few pesos. Actually, what the RTWPBs did was an ultimate freeze in wages in exchange for this dime-a-dozen gimmickry," Hicap said.

The two militant leaders said the RTWPBs may actually be trying to impede possible developments in the campaign for a legislated P125 wage increase.

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The WORLD

Editor **Luverne B. Gueco**

France dumps EU Charter, plunging Europe into crisis

PARIS—French voters massively rejected the EU's first-ever constitution Sunday, dealing a slap in the face to President Jacques Chirac and a potentially fatal setback to the continent's ambitious plans for deeper political union.

"For me—a European at heart—this is a profound disappointment," said Prime Minister Jean-Pierre Raffarin, likely to be the first political victim of the treaty's rejection.

Final results from the interior ministry early Monday put the "no" vote at 54.87 percent. That result had been predicted, but the wide margin of victory deepened a sense of crisis across the European Union.

Turnout was high, at about 70 percent, reflecting the intensity of the national debate.

Defense Minister Michele Alliot-Marie called the result "a defeat for France and a defeat for Europe."

Chirac appeared on national television to "take note" of the constitution's rejection.

He said he would continue to speak out for France in the EU, but added: "Let us make no mistake, France's decision inevitably creates a difficult context for the defense of our interests in Europe."

Confirming predictions that he would reshuffle his Cabinet, Chirac said an announcement would be made in the coming days, with Raffarin's dismissal widely expected.

The result was a crushing blow to the 72-year-old president, who put his authority on the line with three televised appeals for a "yes" vote—warning that rejection would marginalize France's voice in Europe and do nothing to safeguard its generous social model.

Instead the public was swayed by fears that the treaty would destroy the country's welfare system, leach new powers to Brussels and shift jobs to low-cost economies of eastern Europe.

The rejection opened up a period of deep political uncertainty inside the EU, as the constitution needs to be ratified by all 25 members.

In Brussels, Luxembourg Prime Minister Jean-Claude Juncker, whose country currently holds the rotating EU presidency, insisted that the treaty—which theoretically requires approval of all 25 EU member states—was not dead.

"The process of ratification must continue in the other countries," he told reporters after the historic French "non."

By creating the posts of EU president and foreign minister and streamlining the process of decision-making in an enlarged bloc, the treaty's 448 articles are intended to build European muscle at a time of intensifying global competition.

So far nine countries have approved the constitution and the rest aim to continue the procedure up to a deadline of October 2006, but it is unclear how the text can survive now that it has been nixed in one of the EU's six founder members and half of the key Franco-German axis.

European leaders fear the French "no" could have a domino effect in other countries planning to hold referendums—first of all the Netherlands which has a non-binding national vote on Wednesday.

The French president—who marked 10 years in office earlier this month—ignored calls for his resignation, instead hinting he would dismiss the unpopular Raffarin in the coming days. *AFP*

NON
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"NO" vote supporters celebrate after France voted against the ratification of the European Constitution, Paris, May 29. France overwhelmingly rejected the European Union's Constitution in a referendum on Sunday dealing a potentially fatal blow to a charter designed to make the enlarged bloc run smoothly. REUTERS

Five reasons for 'No' vote

PARIS—Here are some reasons given by "No" voters and political analysts to explain why France rejected the EU Constitution:

- High unemployment. Voters say they are angry about persistently high unemployment, which is now over 10 percent. They say French and EU leaders are out of touch with voters and have not done enough to tackle the country's economic problems.
- Free-market economic policies. Critics say the constitution enshrines a pro-market economic model which puts business interests ahead of social concerns.

They say it would not protect workers enough and would drive firms out of France to states with lower wages and costs in eastern Europe.

- Declining influence. The "No" camp fears French influence will decline inside the bloc as the constitution strips countries of more sovereign rights and moves power to Brussels.
- Renegotiation. Leading opponents of the treaty said a "No" vote could force the European Union to renegotiate the constitution and include more safeguards for European workers. EU leaders and advocates of the treaty in France have said this is not possible.
- Turkey. Some voters fear the constitution paves the way for Turkey to enter the EU and the referendum on it may be their only opportunity to oppose such a move. *Reuters*

Double suicide attack kills 25 as Baghdad clampdown tightens

HILLA, Iraq—A double suicide attack killed at least 25 people south of Baghdad on Monday as insurgents struck back against a massive operation by Iraq to try to restore security in the capital.

"We have 25 killed and 100 wounded," said Hilla hospital director Mohammed Dhia, adding that all the casualties were former police commandos.

"The attack was carried out by two suicide bombers wearing explosives belts," a police source said.

The early morning blasts in Hilla, 100 km south of Baghdad, targeted a crowd of around 500 former commandos who had reportedly lost their jobs and come to get back-pay.

In February, a bomb in the same town killed 118 people.

Insurgent attacks nationwide have killed around 700 people this month, following the swearing-in of Iraq's first democratically elected post-Saddam government.

On Sunday, a string of car bombings in and around Baghdad—reportedly masterminded by al-Qaida's Abu Musab al-Zarqawi—killed 16 people, most of them security personnel, in a swift response to Iraq's widest homegrown clampdown since the fall of Saddam Hussein over two years ago.

"Squadrons and brigades directed by the sheikh of the mujahedeen Abu Musab al-Zarqawi on Sunday launched an operation ... planned and supervised by our sheikh," said an Internet statement attributed to his group.

The operation, it said, was a reply to the "aborted encirclement plan in Baghdad announced by the Iraqi ministers of defense and interior," a reference to the security net expected to involve up to 40,000 Iraqi security forces that was launched the same day.

It was not possible to verify the authenticity of the statement, the latest in a series of sometimes conflicting messages about the health of the Jordanian-born militant and his role in the insurgency.

Nevertheless, the government claimed it had already captured hundreds of insurgents.

"Search operations and raids have allowed us to arrest 500 people and find arms caches in several houses," spokesperson Leith Kubba said on Sunday.

He added: "We are expecting reactions but this will have no effect on the general course of the operation."

A defense ministry source said: "The army has set up fixed checkpoints around Baghdad as well as mobile controls, and raids have been launched in the city."

Defense Minister Saadun al-Dulaimi unveiled the operation on Thursday, saying: "We're going to set up a security cordon around Baghdad ... and it will be impossible for terrorists to cross." *AFP*

Corruption bigger threat than terror, says Indonesia

JAKARTA—Indonesia's anticorruption chief says graft is a bigger threat to the country than terrorism and he vowed to pursue cases in the banking industry while keeping a close eye on key state companies.

But Taufiequrachman Ruki, head of the Anti-Corruption Commission (KPK), said his 18-month-old agency was badly stretched by an aggressive probe into the election commission that 70 percent of his staff were working on.

"Corruption is a kind of terrorism. Corruption kills and makes more people despair than other forms of terrorism," Ruki, a retired police general, told Reuters in an interview on Monday.

"I believe that starvation in this republic is caused by this incompetence," he added, referring to cases where aid does not reach impoverished regions because of graft.

Bombings blamed on militants linked to al-Qaida have hit the world's most populous Muslim nation in recent years, but graft often tops opinion polls as the thing most Indonesians detest.

Global graft watchdog Transparency International lists Indonesia as the world's fifth most corrupt country, a statistic that has hindered efforts to attract foreign investment.

"The government and the majority of people have realized that without cleaning up corruption, we shouldn't expect investment to come," said Ruki.

"That's why I say this nation and government is quite serious, very serious," he said, insisting President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono's war on graft was not just rhetoric.

Yudhoyono, who is close to Ruki, took power last year promising "shock therapy" in fighting graft.

He has energized the KPK, which has the power to make arrests, take over investigations from the police and which works in tandem with a special anticorruption court that was established to try to fast-track sensitive graft cases.

In April the court passed its first verdict, jailing the governor of Aceh province for 10 years on corruption charges related to the purchase of a helicopter in 2001.

KPK's biggest case so far involves a probe into the election commission, a body comprised largely of respected academics which won praise for organizing last year's landmark elections.

Four officials have been arrested, including its chief, in a case that centers on alleged kickbacks paid by firms that won contracts to supply materials for the polls.

The case showed just how bad the system was in Indonesia and highlighted the temptation to abuse power, Ruki said. *Reuters*

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Press freedom deteriorating, newspaper association told

SEOUL—Press freedom is deteriorating worldwide and freedom of expression is under siege in many countries, the World Association of Newspapers said Sunday ahead of Asia's largest-ever gathering of media executives.

"The press is simply muzzled in many countries," said a report from the WAN Board, meeting on the eve of the 58th World Newspaper Congress and the World Editors Forum.

"Attacks on journalists are common. Too many killers of journalists remain free.

"A total of 38 journalists have been killed since November 2004. Hundreds more have been arrested, assaulted and harassed."

The report said that in the past six months, the Philippines and Iraq were the most deadly places for the media, with a total of 19 journalists killed in both places.

The report also targeted autocratic regimes throughout the world which repress freedom of expression.

"The suffocation of independent media continues unabated in countries throughout the world," said the report.

"The governments of Nepal, Cuba, Belarus, Turkmenistan, Eritrea, China and Zimbabwe, to name only a few of the worst offenders, have refused to surrender their monopoly on information, finding more and more audacious mechanisms to maintain their vice-like grip on media."

Investigative journalists challenging some of those regimes told the congress, at a Sunday discussion, of the risks and sometimes fatal dangers of their work.

Chinese journalist Lian Qingchuang, suspended from his position as managing editor of China's 21st Century World Herald in March 2003, said that crusading Chinese reporters were trying to roll back the boundaries of state control.

"We never know how far we can go," he told the roundtable forum held at the opening of the Congress.

"In China, if you come up with a good story, the government will ask you to stop working for a while."

Kavi Chongkittavorn, executive editor of The Nation in Bangkok, said Asian journalists needed to speak with one voice to promote press freedom.

"There has been no progress in setting up a regional human rights mechanism," he said.

"We have not really got together in making common cause and that is our weakness. We only talk about our economic progress. Southeast Asian journalists and Asian journalists must get together to face this common problem."

About 1,000 participants from more than 80 countries are taking part in the World Newspaper Congress and the simultaneous World Editors Forum, Asia's largest ever gathering of international media executives, according to the organizers, the Paris-based World Association of Newspapers. *AFP*

DRAG Queen known as Kaka showing form during the 9th annual gay parade in Sao Paulo May 29. AP

Gays hold biggest parade in Brazil

SAO PAULO—The main avenues of Brazil's financial capital were jammed with dancers and revelers Sunday during the ninth annual Gay Pride parade, the biggest of its kind in the world.

Organizers said that some two million people marched and danced to demand the legalization of civil unions among homosexuals. Police put the number at 1.8 million.

"There have never been so many people at the Gay Pride Parade," said Pedro Almeida, a spokesperson for the gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender group that organized the parade.

"This shows true support for our cause, that of civil unions of people of the same sex," he said. "It is not only homosexuals and lesbians that participate in the parade, also sympathizers."

According to Globo News network, the event attracted some 700,000 tourists, Sao Paulo's biggest tourist event of the year.

The first such parade in Sao Paulo in 1997 drew only 2,000 people. Last year some 1.5 people marched.

This year's massive turnout made the event the largest gay pride parade in the world, twice the size of the gay pride parade in San Francisco, California. *AFP*

Japan court rejects national ID system

TOKYO—A Japanese court on Monday said the government's national computerized ID system "seriously violates" citizens' constitutional right to privacy, and ordered a prefectural (state) government in western Japan to remove data on dozens of residents from the system.

Kanazawa District Court Justice Kenichi Ido ruled the Juki Net system unconstitutional because citizens have no control over their own personal data, public broadcaster NHK and other media said.

Ishikawa prefectural government was told to remove the 28 plaintiffs from its system, the reports said.

The ruling was the first of several lawsuits aimed at forcing the government to shut down its online database, which contains the name, address, birthdate and sex of all 126 million Japanese nationals and was introduced in August 2002 to speed administrative procedures.

Court spokesperson Akihiko Yasuno confirmed that the court had ruled in favor of the residents, but had rejected their demands for total compensation of $57,000. He refused to offer other details.

Ishikawa prefectural official Yukihiro Oshika called the ruling "regrettable" and said the prefectural government was "closely examining the ruling" before deciding whether to appeal.

"I can't possibly grasp how the court could find the network unconstitutional," Chief Cabinet Secretary Hiroyuki Hosoda told reporters.

The plaintiffs' lawyers hailed Monday's verdict.

"Joining the registry should be a decision made by each individual. The verdict backs our claim 120 percent that the registry violates the right to privacy granted by Article 13 of the constitution," said lawyer Masaaki Iwabuchi. *AP*

FAHD

King Fahd 'improving,' says Saudi

RIYADH—The health of King Fahd is improving, Saudi Arabia said Sunday, as the oil-rich state sought to calm jitters about the health of its ruler after three days in hospital for tests on a lung ailment.

In the most upbeat assessment of the king's health since he was admitted to hospital last week, Interior Minister Prince Nayef bin Abdel Aziz said: "Thanks to God, his health is in (a state of) constant improvement."

Prince Nayef rubbished reports that the monarch, believed to be 84, is in a serious condition, which he said were due to a "collapse in morality and credibility" on the part of the media.

No concrete details about his condition have been forthcoming, but official sources have said that King Fahd was suffering from a lung infection.

The monarch has been frail since suffering a stroke a decade ago and has delegated the running of day-to-day affairs to his half-brother and likely successor, Crown Prince Abdullah. *AFP*

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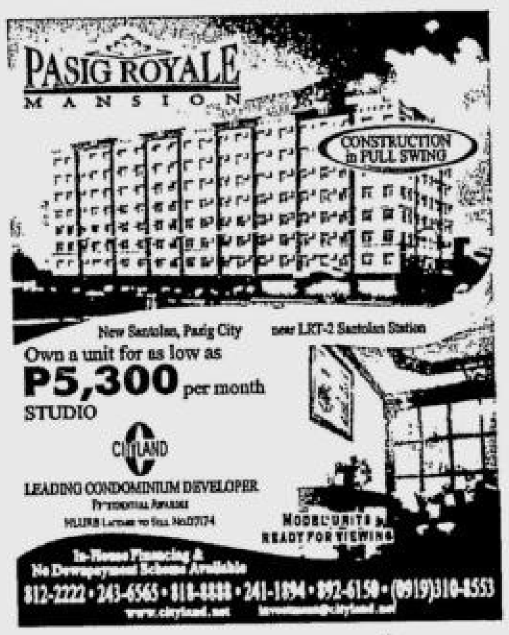

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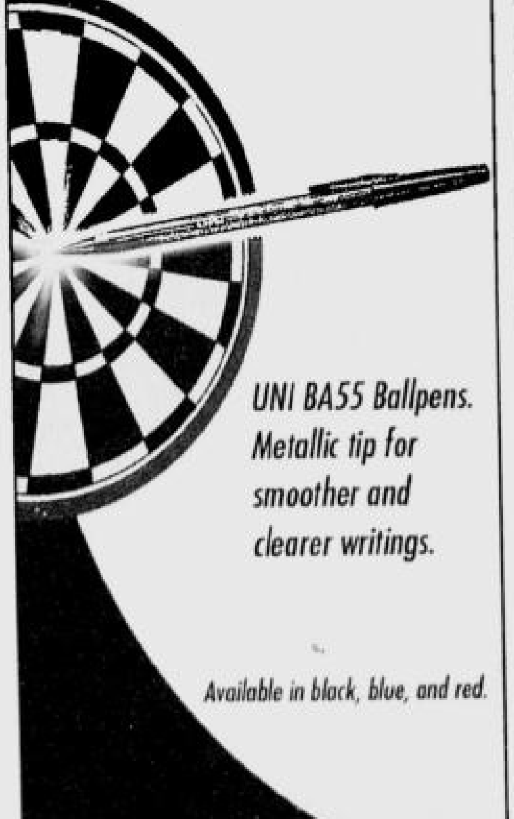

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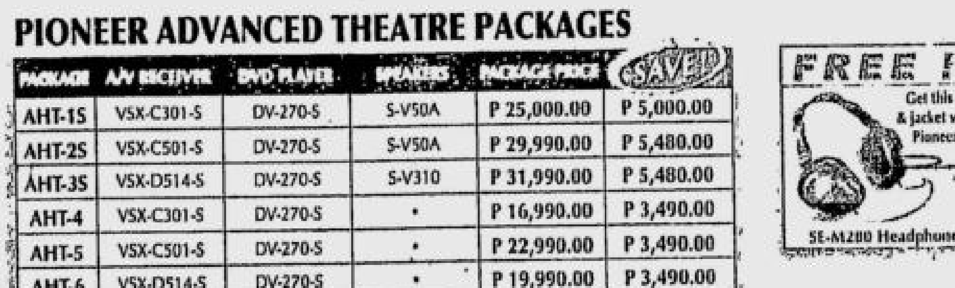

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Osiraq-like strike on Iran still possible, says planner

By Dan Williams

TEL AVIV—Military action would not stop Iran's nuclear program but could be a last resort to delay any quest for an atomic bomb, the mastermind of Israel's 1981 air strike on the Iraqi reactor at Osiraq said on Monday.

While Israel and its US ally have not excluded the option of attacking Iran if all diplomatic efforts to curb its nuclear capability fail, independent experts believe the Islamic republic's facilities are too dispersed and fortified to be eliminated militarily.

But David Ivry, who planned the Osiraq raid as then chief of the Israeli air force, argued against thinking in all-out terms.

"You cannot eliminate an idea, a national will. But you can delay progress on a nuclear program with the appropriate military action," Ivry said. "That is a valuable objective in itself."

Eight Israeli F-16 jets, using detachable fuel containers and relatively light bombs to extend their range, destroyed Osiraq on June 7, 1981. The Iraqi quest for atomic weapons was driven underground until UN inspectors uncovered it in 1991.

"When Israel struck Osiraq, the intention was never to get rid of Saddam Hussein's nuclear plans. We wanted to buy time, and we succeeded in doing that," Ivry said.

Iran has denied seeking an atomic bomb, saying its nuclear program is for energy needs only.

It has suspended uranium enrichment, a process that can produce bombs, at the behest of France, Britain and Germany. But Washington wants Tehran referred to the UN Security Council for possible sanctions if it does not scrap the program.

Israel, believed to be the Middle East's only nuclear power, has made no secret of seeking means to confront Iran militarily.

But it denies planning to attack its arch-foe unilaterally.

However, Israeli officials say they have assessed that Iran will obtain the know-how to make atomic weapons within months.

That is a more pressing prognosis than Washington's, suggesting Israel could yet go it alone.

"A country decides when to act against the enemy based on its assessment of when the threat has become insufferable. You set a deadline beyond which you believe you will lose the option of acting," Ivry said. "With Osiraq, it was the fact that the Iraqis were about to bring uranium into the reactor."

Although a fleet of advanced F-16i jets has extended the Jewish state's reach into the Gulf, analysts doubt an Israeli strike could deal with the dozens of nuclear facilities in Iran, a state much bigger than Iraq and with formidable air defenses.

"Israel's best option would be a simultaneous multipronged strike using different routes, for example through Jordan and Iraq as well as the Mediterranean route through Turkey and or Azerbaijan," Kaveh Afrasiabi, a political analyst at Tehran University, said in a recent published article.

"Yet at present neither option is available to Israel... given Iran's cordial relations with its neighbors and the fears and concerns of those neighbors of a severe Iranian backlash in case they permit their air space for an Israeli attack on Iran."

The warplanes that bombed Osiraq overflew Jordan and Saudi Arabia, which were then formally at war with Israel. But Ivry said seeking permission would not be necessary.

"I do not know of any country that would ask permission of another (to use its air space). Doing so would compromise the secrecy of the mission, and approval would not be forthcoming anyway. When dealing with a mission seen as crucial for national security, such issues are irrelevant," said Ivry.

The retired general also disputed the assumption that all or most of Iran's facilities would have to be tackled in a strike.

"It is enough to hit the key component of the production cycle to put the whole operation out of action," he said.

"Given the sensitivity of the technologies in question, a strike that simply shakes the structure housing them is usually sufficient to cause irreparable damage. Total destruction of the target is not necessary or even desirable."

And although an "Osiraq option" against Iran is a matter of widespread speculation, Ivry suggested that Israel could still have tricks in store if it decided to proceed with a strike.

"The Iranians attacked Osiraq twice before we did (in the Iran-Iraq war). Each time, the Iraqis bolstered their defenses at the site. So even then, we did not really have the element of surprise in terms of the overall concept of a strike," he said.

"If and when Iran is attacked, I think I can assure you it will come as a surprise to everyone." *AP*

SAAD Hariri, right, son of Lebanon's slain former Premier Rafik Hariri, seen in poster, and Hariri's widow Nazek celebrate in their house in Beirut, after polling stations closed. AP

Hariri's son set for clean sweep in Lebanon vote

BEIRUT—The son of murdered former premier Rafiq Hariri was celebrating Monday a likely clean sweep in the Beirut round of Lebanon's parliamentary elections, the first in three decades free of Syria's grip.

Official results due Monday were expected to confirm victory for Saad Hariri at the head of an anti-Syrian coalition in all 19 seats up for grabs in the capital in Sunday's vote.

But fewer than one-in-three voters cast ballots, leaving the opposition without the massive popular endorsement they had hoped for given the sea-change in Lebanon's political scene since the last Syrian soldier left a month ago.

Hariri's success is widely seen as a vote for his father whose February killing in a Beirut bomb blast triggered a major political upheaval in Lebanon that led Damascus to end its 29-year military presence.

"Beirut gives its votes to its martyr," said the As-Safir newspaper, attributing the low turnout to the fact that the Hariri lists in Beirut's three constituencies were assured of victory after many rival candidates stood aside.

"This is a victory for Rafiq Hariri... the blood of Rafiq Hariri will not go in vain," Saad Hariri announced to cheering crowds of supporters outside his Beirut home after the close of polls on Sunday.

Hariri, a 35-year-old businessman but a newcomer to the world of politics, has so far remained coy about whether he would consider taking on the post of prime minister that his billionaire tycoon father held five times.

"The results were a referendum for the continuation of Rafiq Hariri's national, political and economic policies," Al Liwaa daily said.

But just 28 percent of registered voters cast their ballot in the first round of the elections, which were held under tight security.

Turnout was especially low in Christian areas where some parties had called for a boycott due to electoral disputes.

"We are saddened by the low turnout, especially among the Christians," said influential Maronite Cardinal Nasrallah Sfeir, one of the strongest opponents of Syria's political domination of Lebanon.

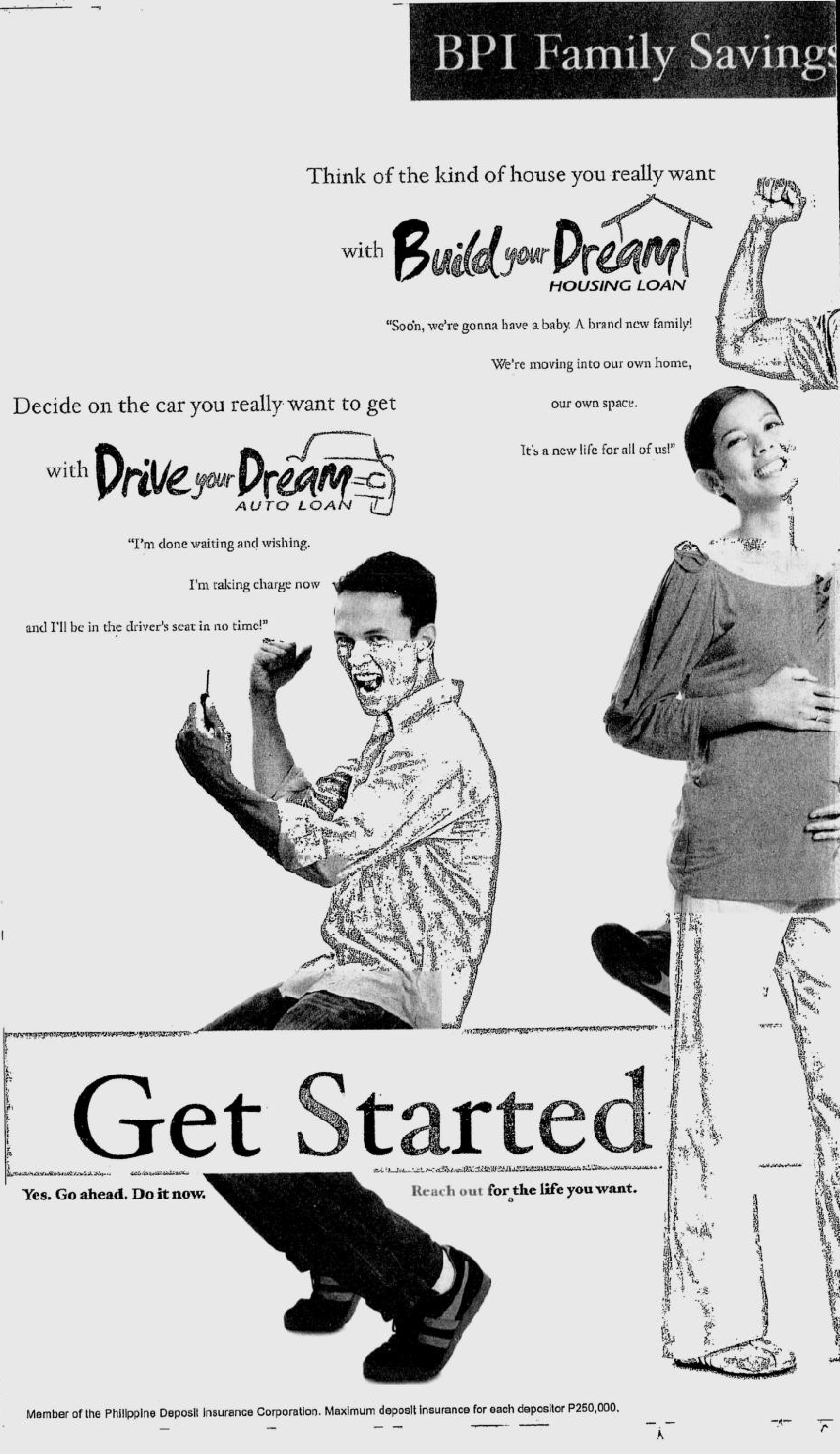
Damascus was the key powerbroker both on the ground in Lebanon and in the corridors of power, a role which ensured the pro-Syrian camp triumphed in the three legislative elections held since the end of the 1975-1990 civil war.

Interior Minister Hassan Sabaa said international observers—monitoring the elections for the first time—had congratulated Lebanese authorities for a clean process.

"The first Lebanese elections under international observers: surprise and praise!" said the leading An-Nahar newspaper.

More than 100 European Union and United Nations observers are on the ground for the elections, which will take place over the next three Sundays in other parts of the country.

The United Nations hailed the "successful conduct" of the first round. *AFP*



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*Preventing Iron Deficiency in Women and Children, UNICEF New York October 1998.

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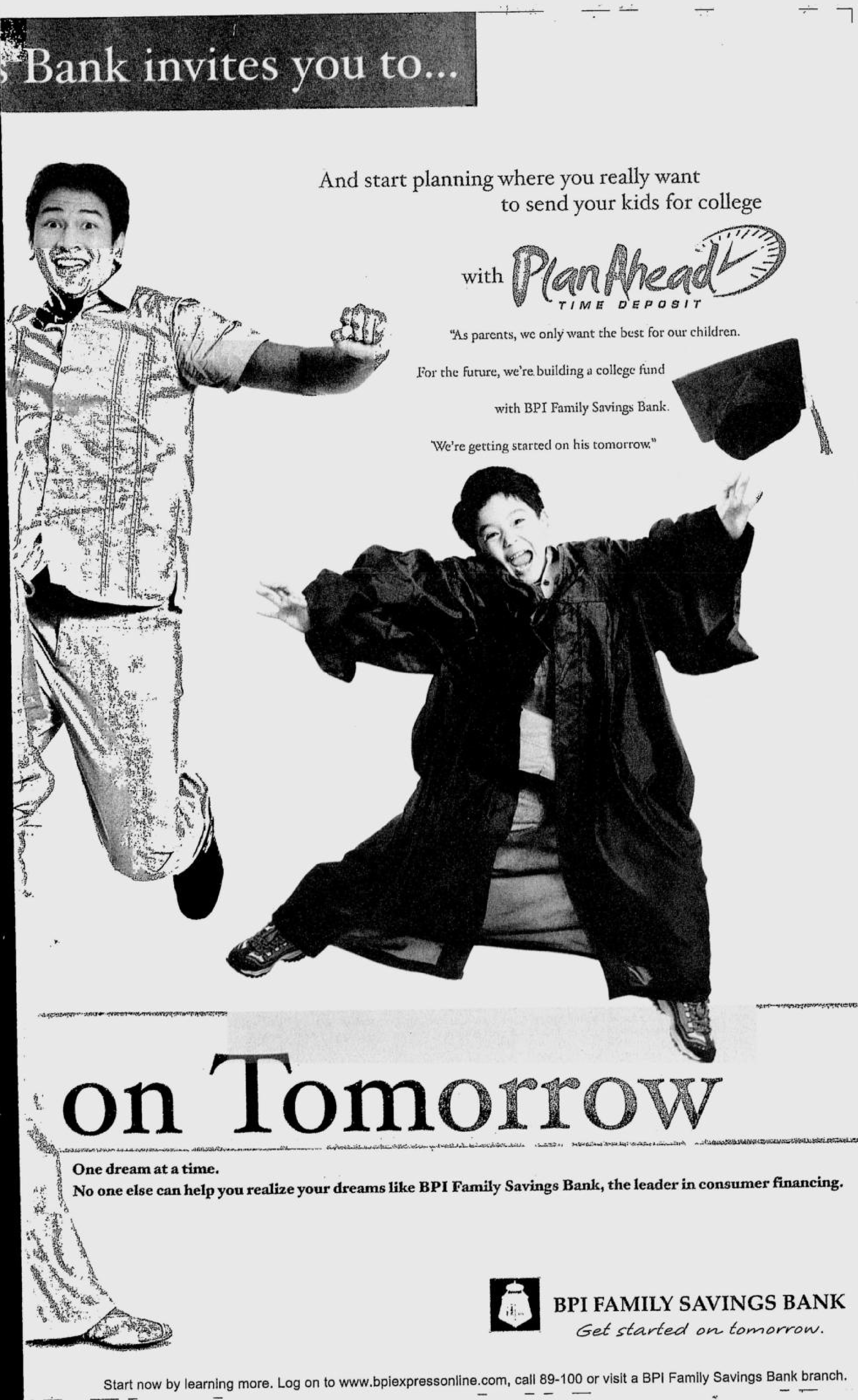
AFGHAN refugee women walk inside an abandoned building in Kabul, Afghanistan, where they and other returning exiles are living in March 4, photo. Violence and systematic discrimination against women was rampant in Asia last year, Amnesty International said in the annual report on the state of human rights in the world. AP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Abuse still daily fare of Afghan women–IA

KABUL—Women in Afghanistan continue to suffer widespread abuse at the hands of male family members, militias and institutions such as the police and judiciary, rights group Amnesty International said Monday.

Afghan women are at daily risk of abduction, rape and forced marriage, as well as being traded as chattels to settle disputes and debts, the global watchdog said releasing its latest report.

Amnesty called on the Afghan government and the international community to do more to protect women and girls.

"Husbands, brothers and fathers remain the main perpetrators of violence in the home," said the report.

"But the social control and the power that they (men) exercise is reinforced by both state authorities and informal justice systems," it added.

During the five-year rule of the Taliban, who seized power in 1996, women were banned from classrooms and workplaces and forced to wear the all-covering burqa veil in their rarely permitted forays from home.

Since the collapse of the regime in late 2001, women have slowly clawed back some of their rights, returning to jobs, schools and public life. But oppression remains rife, according to Amnesty.

The report blamed state institutions for their "systematic failure" to protect women from abuse and violence within and outside families.

"Violence against women and girls in Afghanistan is pervasive," it said. "Throughout the country, few women are exempt from violence or safe from the threat of it," the report said.

Women face discrimination from all segments of society as well as by state officials, it adds.

Violence against women is widely accepted by the community and inadequately addressed at the highest levels of the government and the judiciary, the group said.

The report says investigations by the authorities into complaints of violent attacks, rape, murders or suicide of women are neither routine nor systematic, and few result in prosecutions. *AFP*

Worst drought in 100 years batters Australia

CANBERRA—Australia's farmers, battling the worst drought in a century, received an extra A$250 million ($189 million) in government support on Monday as residents in the nation's biggest city braced for tougher water restrictions.

After three years of low rainfall in some of the nation's farming districts, Prime Minister John Howard announced increased interest-rate subsidies and extra income support to stop farmers walking away from their properties.

"People who would otherwise be efficient, profitable farmers, are being beaten down by this terrible drought," Howard told reporters.

Howard toured drought-stricken areas on May 20 and saw dusty paddocks, dried up dams and starving sheep and cattle. He talked to farmers to see how they were coping with the dry conditions.

Water levels are also at new lows in the major cities, with the main dams supplying water for about four million people in the biggest city, Sydney, below 40 percent capacity after the warmest and driest autumn on record.

Sydney's Warragamba Dam, which supplies about 80 percent of the city's fresh water, is only 36 percent full and residents have endured tough restrictions on water use since June 2004 as water supplies dwindle.

Householders have been banned from using sprinklers and automated watering systems on their gardens, while people are banned from hosing down their cars or driveways. *Reuters*

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OPINION

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Calculated mayhem

EDITORIALS

"THE FIRST thing we do, let's kill all the lawyers," says Dick the Butcher in Shakespeare's "Henry the Sixth."

Some people may be taking Dick the Butcher's call literally insofar as activist and cause-oriented lawyers are concerned. In 2004 seven lawyers and judges were killed and this year, four have been assassinated, for a total of 11 slain in the last 18 months.

The activist lawyers are among the endangered groups during the Arroyo administration, together with the journalists and political and social militants. The killings of lawyers has prompted former Senate President Jovito Salonga to ask: "What are we to say in the face of this seemingly calculated mayhem against the cause-oriented?"

Salonga said that if both the government and the people miss the "dire significance" of the lawyers' killings, "it will be to our grievous peril as a just and democratic society. For it is upon these three basic institutions—that of a free press, a militant church and an uncompromising due process—on which the life and strength of our nation must rest."

There may be many jokes about how lawyers further complicate our already complicated lives, but we do need them to put order in our lives. Lawyers draw up pre-nuptial agreements, protect the rights of children born out of wedlock, draw up the terms of legal separation or annulment of marriage, draft last wills and testaments and settle conflicts when people die intestate. They are needed in many aspects of our political, social and economic life.

Activist lawyers are a special breed who protect the lives and liberties of people and insure the survival of freedom and democracy in our country. Kill them off, and you take a big step toward authoritarian, undemocratic rule. That's why it's alarming that activist lawyers, together with journalists and political militants, appear to be especially targeted for assassination by some people or groups.

In previous editorials, we urged a stop to the killings of journalists. Now we say, stop the killings of activist lawyers. Protect them from those who would smother freedom and democracy in our country.

Gun worship

THE KILLINGS of activist lawyers are part of the culture of violence that is getting worse every day. Each slaying is a grim statistic in the rising tide of criminality engulfing the nation.

The culture of violence is worsening because of the culture of impunity. No one has been punished for the killings of journalists, activist lawyers and political militants. Some henchmen and triggermen are arrested, but the masterminds and the brains go scotfree.

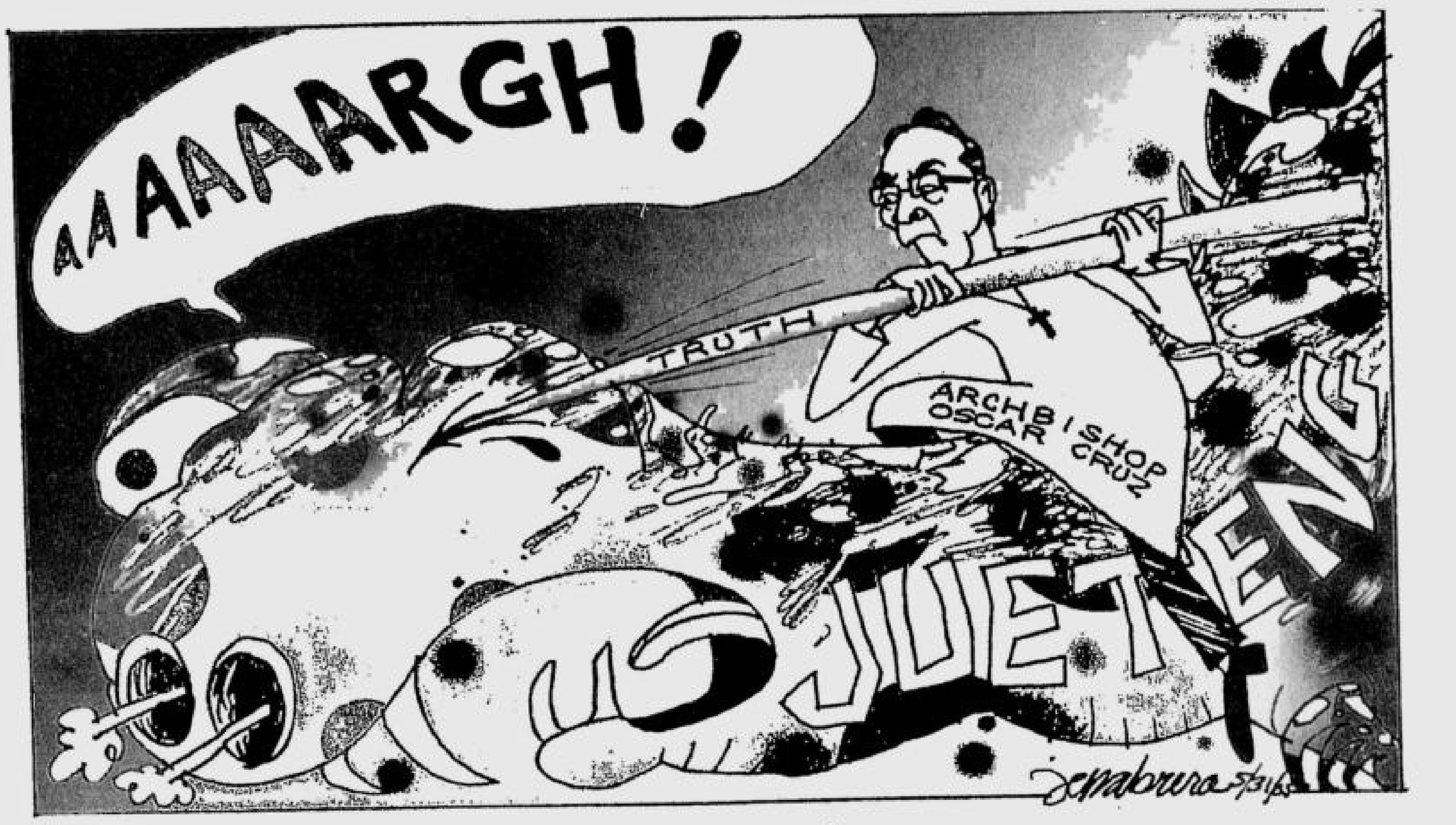
It is very easy to engage in assassination nowadays because weapons are readily available. If one has the money, one can always buy a gun that is needed to do the job. Or if one doesn't want to do the dirty job himself, money will buy a hired gun that will do it for him.

"Gun worship" is a big part of the culture of violence that is making our country one of the most murderous for journalists and activists. Many people just love to buy guns, display them and carry them outside their residences. And at the slightest provocation they are ready to use the guns against their fellowmen.

In the midst of these developments, Nandy Pacheco, president of the Alliance for the Common Good and the Gunless Society, last week suggested to the President and Congress a multi-dimensional approach to peace. His proposal includes a reiteration of what he has been urging all these years—strict gun control that would ban everyone from carrying guns in public places, except police officers, soldiers or licensed private security guards in uniform and on duty.

Pacheco makes it clear that he is not against responsible sportsmen or gun owners keeping licensed guns at home or at a gun club. He would increase the penalty for illegal possession of firearms and violation of any firearms law from reclusion temporal (12 to 20 years imprisonment) without pardon or parole to reclusion perpetua (life imprisonment, with the possibility of pardon after 30 years).

Some people will again say that Pacheco's proposal is quixotic, and almost impossible to carry out. But we have to start somewhere; we have to put order in our country; we have to promote peace and put an end to the violence and lawlessness that are obstacles to the building of a just and orderly society.



Outrage to religion

VIEWPOINT

Juan L. Mercado

THE ITALIAN journalist Oriana Fallaci will be prosecuted by some radical Muslims in some still unspecified country on "charges of outrage to religion," Tribune Media Service reports. Fallaci's new book, "The Force of Reason," triggered this threat.

In Quezon City, outraged Iglesia ni Cristo leaders asked the city regional trial court to ban a book that hasn't even reached bookstores yet, columnist Jojo Robles reports. Ross Tipon will title his book-to-be, "The Power and the Glory: The Cult of Manalo."

The 74-year-old Fallaci is known in the trade as a "take-no-prisoners journalist." She blurts out what people are thinking. "Those who only say what they're asked to say are *putains a la page* (polished sluts)," she once wrote.

This Florence-born reporter's blunt interviewing style stuns people. Ayatollah Khomeini sputtered when she flung aside the mandatory veil for women. "Let's talk about war," she began a session with then US Secretary of State Henry Kissinger. "You're not a pacificist are you?"

But like the equally blunt but more polite Tim Sebastian of BBC, Fallaci gets the stories out. In her book, "A Man," she combines the "psychological insights of a great novelist and the irreverence of a bratty quiz kid, " writes the New York Times Book Review.

Unlike Fallaci, we have little to go by, either in previous books or sustained journalism records by Tipon. The title, though, recalls Graham Greene's 1940 novel, "The Power and the Glory," a searing probe into "religion's searing complexities in contemporary culture," as Professor Emeritus of Hebrew and Cognate Languages Samuel Terrien notes.

Green never named his main character, an alcoholic priest who fathered a child. Despite his flaws, he doggedly celebrates Mass, baptizes children and hears confessions, while being hunted by the police. Just before crossing the border, he turns back, responding to a call for him to anoint a dying man. It was a trap. Caught, he was executed at dawn.

The whiskey priest loathed himself, yet "responded to the betrayal's reality leading him to his death," writes Terrien in "New Theology." Greene "searched without pause for a Christianity that transfigures the whole of existence but does not create an egoistic satisfaction of security."

If and when it comes off the press, "The Power and The Glory" (local version) will be different. In e-mails to journalists, the author signals it'll be a stab at investigative journalism on issues festering within INC. These include, among other things, policy questions: Does the INC forbid members from joining labor unions? Will it continue to practice "voting in bloc"?

"Social Weather Station reported after the last election that a quarter of your membership rejected the idea," the author wrote to INC Executive Minister Eraño Manalo. "In the 1986 'snap election'…a good chunk of your membership voted for Cory Aquino…Do you have any plans to do away with this practice?"

Demographic data in the Visayas, Mindanao and Bicol show, he claims, "INC is now being outstripped by Evangelicals and even by mainline Protestants such as Baptists, UCCPs and United Methodists."

This outline resembles more Gringo Honsan's plan to stitch together a book by a committee still to be convened. "Retroactive journalism," Honasan & Co. say, will document how coup-plotters saved democracy for the Filipino people not vice-versa as most believe.

The 1987 Constitution, however, remains law of the land. And it provides for liberty to disseminate information, by print or electronic media, without prior restraint such as licensing requirements or content review. It forbids subsequent punishment for what is said. It shields all even from outraged religious leaders.

This prohibition against prior restraint sets aside democracies from banana republics. Its roots go all the way back to 1644. In "Areopagitica," John Milton attacked restrictive measures on the press by Tudor and Stuart monarchs. Milton's objections to prior restraint eventually became a cornerstone, of press freedom.

The only recognized grounds for prior restraint has been national security. But in 1971, the US Supreme Court struck down a suit against Daniel Ellsberg who leaked the Pentagon papers. Freedom of the press and speech were protected as fundamental rights of the people, the court declared.

(Obscenity and violations of copyright were considered outside the First Amendment's shield. Like commercial speech, advertising or product claims are afforded a reduced level of protection. In addition, broadcasters are subject to government licensing requirements.)

The Philippines has steadfastly hewed to this libertarian concept. The only exception was during the aberration of martial law. The Marcos dictatorship dismantled constitutional protections in the name of saving the country from communism.

Today, the debate swirls around protection for users of cyberspace technology. Significantly, a US federal district court panel in 1996 held that Internet message were entitled to the same degree of protection as printed communications.

Come June 10, we will see how the Quezon City court resolves the INC bid to ban a still-to-be-published book. Will it unleash constitutional hail and brimstone? *Abangan*, the barber on the street corner says.

"We don't have to like them," Tribune columnist Kathleen Parker. writes. "But to silence them is to invite silence to our own hearths. Thus, 'outrage to religion' isn't a crime, but is a testament to our faith in freedom."

(E-mail: juan_mercado@pacific.net.ph)

Drunk with power

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

"IS it just my imagination," a friend asked me, "or have cars with sirens deluged our streets of late?"

At the time my friend asked me this, which was my birthday last Friday, I had just had another experience with one. I was on Edsa on my way to Makati when a big car (my son identified it as a Ford Expedition; I don't know about these things) began honking at me from behind. He had all sorts of lights blinking on the front of his car, making it look like a disco, and a siren was flashing bright red on the roof of his car. Thank God for small blessings, it wasn't wailing angrily at the world. I was on the left lane and had a slew of cars in front of me. I had absolutely no idea what possessed him to go into honking mode. I myself had absolutely no intention of budging even if there weren't any cars in front of me.

Eventually, he spun to his right, and wove through the other cars, like an ambulance. I wanted to get the idiot's number, but saw only the number "8." If I'm not mistaken, that means congressman. I was right, an idiot.

No, I assured my friend, it was not her imagination getting away with her. I've had the experience more and more frequently of late. The most infuriating of which is the procession of black cars that now and then tear down at me from the opposite direction—"counterflow," we felicitously call it—sirens blaring. If they had a loudspeaker, they would probably be screaming, "You don't step aside, you die!"

That's the reason I sympathized completely with the horde of people who called up Arnold Clavio's and Ali Sotto's program on dzBB last week to protest the injustice of Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez's driver. A motorist named Jo complained that Gonzalez's escorts poked their guns at him when he tried to pass their slow-moving two-car convoy on Edsa. Gonzalez's driver, a fellow named Roman, justified the use of force saying that when motorists see a convoy of government cars, they should get the hell out of the way. When Clavio protested this, saying he had as much right to the road as a government official, Roman retorted, "I dare him to say that to the Presidential Security Group and see what they will do to him."

Contacted by the INQUIRER, Gonzalez denied knowing Roman personally. He said he had a number of drivers and knew them only by their faces. He denied as well that his escorts poked their guns at the hapless motorist. But he agreed with Roman's viewpoint about public officials being treated regally on streets. "If people are complaining about the sirens and blinkers, then all Cabinet men should take them off." The reason Cabinet men had them, he said, was that they "have work schedules that are not usual to ordinary people who can dictate their time."

Later, Gonzalez spoke at Clavio's and Sotto's program and enlarged on his views, saying if people were complaining about sirens and blinkers, then all ambulances and police cars should take them off too.

Gonzalez should be thankful he does not live in a country like the US where his exaggerated sense of self-importance would have been met by more than derision. He would not last a day in public office at the public uproar he would stir. And he is our justice secretary! Truly we have plunged into an Orwellian nightmare, where Newspeak is the official language, and officials are called by the opposite of what they are, or do. Is it possible he cannot grasp the difference between police cars and ambulances using sirens and public officials doing the same? Quite incidentally, even police cars and ambulances may not use sirens all the time, only when they are chasing criminals or rushing dying patients to hospitals.

The operative word is emergency. What emergency are Cabinet officials trying to meet on a daily basis?

I can, in fact, think of two compelling reasons why Cabinet officials in particular should suffer exactly the same fate as benighted commuters, or be reduced to complete immobility. The first is that it would give them a glimpse of how pretty much the rest of their countrymen live, the better to increase their sense of urgency about alleviating poverty, or at least about using taxes to improve traffic, among other national afflictions, and not just their bank accounts. The second is related to the first. The fact that this country has become the second most corrupt country in Asia must suggest that most public officials, chief of them Cabinet officials, are barefaced crooks. Why should we want to assure that they will get to where they want to go in record time when all that means is that we will be fleeced more thoroughly and swiftly?

But quite apart from this, what gall this fellow has. I myself am trying to meet deadlines all the time, but I do not assume my time is more precious to me or to the country than that of a doctor, or engineer, or teacher. Maybe more than that of a politician or lawyer, but that is another story. I can assure Gonzalez his preoccupations are not more important than mine; they are infinitely less so. At least, I use my time to try to better this nation. He uses his time only to mangle the word "justice." Wasn't he the fellow who told us the best way to greet PERC's news that we were the second most corrupt nation in Asia was to ignore it? Wasn't he the fellow who, apprised of witnesses who were willing to testify against the First Family's complicity in *jueteng*, proposed to go after the witnesses? No, I'm not surprised he should think Cabinet officials are not ordinary mortals but kings of the road.

A friend of mine who heard Gonzalez talk on Clavio-Sotto's program hit the nail on the head. "*Kaya naman pala abusado yung driver,*" he said, "*abusado yung amo.*" (No wonder the driver is abusive, his employer is so.)

Hearsay, says Drilon

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan

THIS column was being written before the start of the first Senate hearing on *jueteng*, conducted by the committees on public order and drugs and games and amusements, chaired by Senators Manuel Villar and Lito Lapid, respectively. I earlier noted the adamant objection of the opposition, led by Sen. Aquilino Pimentel, to any idea of terminating the proceedings. Senate Majority Leader Francis Pangilinan had opined that if "no new and credible information is unearthed during the initial hearing," then the probe could be terminated. That raised Pimentel's dander up. At that point, I was struck by an incredible irony.

* * *

In the 1998 elections, Vice President Joseph Estrada ran for the presidency against Speaker Jose de Venecia, candidate of the best-organized and most powerful political party, the Lakas-NUCD, with only a paper party, Partido ng Masang Pilipino. Erap won on the strength of his movie-star appeal and, as widely acknowledged then by political pundits, the *jueteng* network across the country. The network took care even of distributing his movie films at the barangay level. That network beat the most powerful political machinery at that time and carried Erap to Malacañang. Unfortunately, it also proved his undoing, for the initial smoking gun at his Senate impeachment trial was Chavit Singson's testimony that he and his staff personally delivered payola to Erap's residence.

* * *

The obvious ploy of the opposition is to cause President Arroyo's downfall by linking her relatives and even Ms Arroyo herself to *jueteng*. The Senate hearings were touted in advance to produce key witnesses who would nail her down. Evidently the plan is to arouse an outraged citizenry and the military against GMA in a "template" or "Xerox copy," as Amando Doronila put it, of Edsa II.

Yesterday a witness named Wilfred "Boy" Mayor testified that he had regularly given P500,000 a month to a certain "Katoy," allegedly the bagman of then Pampanga Vice Gov. Mikey Arroyo. Mayor also implicated three Albay congressmen, PNP Director-General Arturo Lomibao and others. The problem, however, as Senate President Franklin Drilon noted at the hearing, is that Mayor's testimony is hearsay inasmuch as he admitted that he never dealt directly with the young Arroyo; it was supposedly Katoy who delivered the money for him. This is unlike the direct testimony of Chavit Singson on Erap. Thus, the credibility of Mayor's testimony has to be established, although Archbishop Oscar Cruz, who also testified, promised stronger witnesses. Let us see.

* * *

Cruz has said a lot of things over the past three weeks about *jueteng*, but perhaps the most sensible was his observation that the PNP report that *jueteng* had been stopped in many places in Luzon was not true, since "guerilla-type *jueteng* operations are rampant in here." Guerilla warfare, however, is the most difficult type to fight, as the AFP's nearly 45-year fight with the NPAs and Muslim dissidents has proved (Defense Chief Avelino Cruz hopes to put an end to insurgency in the next 6 to 10 years). Corollarily, in *jueteng*, this means there cannot be an arbitrary deadline for combating it, as the archbishop suggests (one year). I think he should take a sabbatical leave and take up studies in guerilla warfare first.

* * *

But as I have argued, *jueteng* can be eradicated if political will is exercised by the governor, the mayors and the local police authorities, but ultimately the buck stops at the Palace. Drilon, noting my recollection on how the late Col. Tirso Gador stamped it out in Cagayan in the early 1980s and my lament against the prevailing defeatism, had one comment. He said that in his native Iloilo, there is no *jueteng* because local officials won't have anything to do with it. In fact, in the whole of Panay the governors won't have it. I understand that a colorful mayor in Region IV, who was once reputed to be the godfather of *jueteng* in his area, was asked recently how it seems to have vanished. His answer was simple: "I just stopped."

It can be done, and I hope there will be many more crusaders who will come out and say no to this blood-sucker of the Filipino poor.

* * *

Fe Zamora came out with a story about the Boracay resort being built by the Armed Forces of the Philippines for the use of its personnel down to the rank and file. That project is ill-timed and bound to be misunderstood, no matter how well-intentioned and even if AFP funds were not spent (it was said to have been built from private donations). The AFP landed in the International Herald Tribune last week and earlier in Time Magazine, in a story by Anthony Spaeth, about how unfit it is to fight terrorism on account of poor combat equipment and low personnel morale. Spaeth noted that soldiers and officers have died due to lack of adequate medical facilities.

We at the Alay sa Kawal Foundation have long been aware of this problem in the field. This is why our most recent program is "Doktor Para sa Kawal," where we use a seed money of P5 million given by President Macapagal-Arroyo plus additional funds raised through donations to send scholars to medical school who will serve the combat units as field doctors.

* * *

This Boracay resort is ill-advised and could only contribute even more to the demoralization of the rank and file, as noted by various international news organizations. For one thing, Boracay can only be reached with some ease by officers who are already spending their own holidays in various places. Even though the resort is supposed to cater also to the enlisted personnel, they cannot get to Boracay on their own. In fact, they even have problems getting rides on the C-130s to go home once a year.

We at ASK are aware of this problem and have tried to help them get rides on Aboitiz ships for morale-boosting home leaves. AFP Chief of Staff Gen. Efren Abu should examine his priorities.

French vote puts EU in crisis

NEWS ANALYSIS

Paul Taylor and Yves Clarisse

BRUSSELS—France's massive "no" to the European Union constitution casts Europe into the most severe political crisis for more than a decade, opening a period of uncertainty, introspection and potential paralysis.

For the first time since 1954, when the French parliament rejected a treaty to establish a European Defense Community, a founder country that has been in the vanguard of every step in European integration, has voted against the next stage. And it wasn't even close—computer projections broadcast as soon as polls closed put the "no" vote at about 55 percent.

Since all 25 member states need to ratify the constitution, designed to streamline EU leadership and make decision-making more efficient following the bloc's enlargement, the prospects for its entry into force look dim.

"I think this means the treaty is dead, both legally and politically," said Daniel Keohane, an Irish analyst at the London-based Center for European Reform.

"It means this project is bust," agreed Paul Magnette, director of the European Studies Institute at Brussels ULB University. "Everyone realizes there can't be a second referendum, nor a parliamentary approval."

The crushing margin of defeat appeared to dash hopes in Brussels that the French might be persuaded to vote again later, especially since the turnout was so high.

Furthermore Dutch voters now seem even more likely to reject the charter on Wednesday, and British Prime Minister Tony Blair looks unlikely to hold a referendum next year which would have been hard enough to win if the rest of Europe had voted "yes."

Yet the EU's political leaders appeared to be in denial. European Commission President Jose Manuel Barroso and the president of the European Council, Luxembourg Prime Minister Jean-Claude Juncker, were set to urge member states on Sunday to continue with ratification, aides said.

"The ratification procedure must be pursued in other countries," Juncker told a news conference.

Leaders of the two main political groups in the European Parliament also united to declare that the show must go on. Their hope is that if more than 20 states approve the treaty, they will recreate the political momentum to bring the charter into force, although it is not clear how.

When Germany's upper house ratified the treaty last Friday, the EU executive rushed to proclaim that nine countries representing almost half the bloc's 454 million citizens had now approved the text, strengthening the case for carrying on. But only one, Spain, has approved it in a referendum.

"I would find it extraordinary to tell other nations that they could stay home because the French had decided for them," Juncker told the Belgian daily Le Soir last week.

The leader of the Party of European Socialists, former Danish Prime Minister Poul Nyrup Rasmussen, said in a statement: "This is not the last word on the European constitution...The French 'no' should not be the end to the ratification process. Every citizen of the European Union has the right to vote on this constitution, either directly or through their national parliaments."

French President Jacques Chirac made clear in his television address acknowledging defeat that other countries would continue with their ratification processes.

Most may agree to do so, if only as a temporary expedient, but those at greatest risk of losing a referendum—Britain, the Czech Republic and Poland—may argue for a "pause for thought" when EU leaders next meet on June 16-17 in Brussels.

"I don't see how Tony Blair can be forced to take such an enormous risk for a still-born treaty," Magnette said.

The French vote deals a body blow to the self-confidence of the EU after a string of successes from the introduction of the euro single currency to last year's "big bang" enlargement to take in 10 mainly ex-communist east European states. It may call into question the authority of the European Commission, blamed by French treaty critics for undermining social protection, and make it a greatly weakened scapegoat.

Opponents of further EU enlargement, and especially of the admission of Turkey, were quick to call for a halt. "It will be difficult to talk about expansion," Slovenian Foreign Minister Dmitrij Rupel told reporters in Ljubljana.

The vote highlighted the EU's difficulty in gaining acceptance with voters. Danes rejected the Maastricht Treaty in 1992 and the Irish voted against the Treaty of Nice in 2001. Both countries reversed their verdicts at a second attempt after winning opt-outs or assurances.

The EU will limp on under the Nice Treaty negotiated after a marathon wrangle in 2000 and regarded by most EU insiders as a recipe for paralysis because it makes blocking decisions far easier than taking them.

The weighted voting system gives the majority of small and medium-sized countries disproportionate power but allows the big states to invoke a 62.5 percent population threshold as an emergency brake if they are outvoted.

While there is no official "Plan B" to cope with a French "no," many diplomats have suggested that EU leaders might try to salvage parts of the constitution after a decent interval in a short treaty that could be ratified without referendums.

Among the key reforms in the constitution are a simplified voting system in which most decisions would be adopted if 55 percent of countries with 65 percent of the population agreed, and a long-term president of the European Council and an EU foreign minister to replace the six-monthly rotating presidency.

But experts who have analyzed the idea carefully say it would be very difficult to rescue just those provisions, because the charter is a carefully crafted compromise and each country would want to preserve its own gains.

Reuters

The body snatchers and other trivia

SENSE AND SENSIBILITY

Bambi L. Harper

A LOT of women over 40 will most likely identify with the following e-mail from a friend. The rest of you will most likely get a good laugh although chances are teenagers won't know what I'm talking about. You could amuse yourself and alter certain anatomical parts for the men's point of view, but the resulting conclusion and emotions will probably be the same for both sexes.

"Take whatever extra precautions necessary so this does not happen to you! Most of you have read the scare-mail about the person whose kidneys were stolen while he was passed out. Well, read on. While the kidney story was an urban legend, this one is not. It's happening every day.

"My thighs were stolen from me during the night a few years ago. It was just that quick. I went to sleep in my body and woke up with someone else's thighs. The new ones had the texture of cooked oatmeal. Who would have done such a cruel thing to legs that had been mine for years?

"Whose thighs are these and what happened to mine? I spent the entire summer looking for my thighs. Finally, hurt and angry, I resigned myself to living out my life in jeans and Sheer Energy pantyhose.

"Then, just when my guard was down, the thieves struck again. My butt was next. I knew it was the same gang, because they took pains to match my new rear end (although badly attached at least three inches lower than my original) to the thighs they stuck me with earlier. Now, my rear complemented my legs, lump for lump. Frantic, I prayed that long skirts would stay in fashion.

"It was two years ago when I realized my arms had been switched. One morning I was fixing my hair and I watched horrified but fascinated as the flesh of my upper arms swung to and fro with the motion of the hairbrush. This was really getting scary. My body was being replaced one section at a time. How clever and fiendish.

"Age? Age had nothing to do with it. Age is supposed to creep up, unnoticed, something like maturity. NO, I was being attacked repeatedly and without warning. In despair, I gave up my T-shirts. What could they do to me next? My poor neck disappeared more quickly than the Thanksgiving turkey it now resembled. That's why I decided to tell my story. I can't take on the medical profession by myself.

"Women of the world, wake up and smell the coffee. That really isn't plastic that those surgeons are using. You KNOW where they are getting those replacement parts, don't you? The next time you suspect someone has had a face 'lifted,' look again. Was it lifted from you?

"I think I finally found my thighs and I hope that Cindy Crawford paid a really good price for them! This is not a hoax. This is happening to women in every town every night. WARN YOUR FRIENDS.

"P.S. I must say that last year I thought someone had stolen my breasts. I was lying in bed and they were gone! As I jumped out of bed I was relieved to see that they had just been hiding in my armpits as I slept. Now I keep them hidden in my waistband."

* * *

Fond memories of childhood were awakened in Robert Manasan, late of Sta. Cruz, Manila, now a resident of Virginia, USA, by the article on Botica Boie. He wrote:

"My Lolo Ciano, who moved to Binondo from Lubao as a young man, worked as an apprentice pharmacist at Botica Boie sometime in the 1920s. I have his Commonwealth government license that allowed him to practice as such. I am guessing that he worked for them from the 1920s until World War II started and we all evacuated to Lubao, returning after the liberation.

"I don't know if he worked for them again after the war, but I vaguely remember going to Botica Boie for merienda at their soda fountain. He was able to send his three sons to the university on his salary and ended up with a dentist, an architect (my dad, the resident architect of jai-alai) and a doctor, who ended up as an army surgeon-general in the 1970s. (This is a very clear explanation of the Filipino diaspora. The worst part is that we don't see government bending over backwards to create better employment but rather government actually encouraging citizens to work abroad). Lolo Ciano died in 1950 at the age of 69, the morning of the day Tio Gorio was leaving for Korea.

"He went to work in white *de hilo* suits with a black bow tie and a panama hat with a black band. I remember Lolo as a reserved, quiet gentleman who spoke little and had a patrician look about him.

"What I remember most about Botica Boie was their electric-eye door opener. It may have been the first one installed in Manila(?). I used to stand next to the short stainless steel post that held the magic eye and keep moving my hand back and forth to block the light beam and make the door open and close. Oddly enough I don't remember any adult rushing to me to make me stop what I was doing. Where was everybody? I must have been about nine years old."

Still on Botica Boie, it may interest some devotees of historical trivia to find out that when it closed in 1969, the soda fountain, including its staff, moved to the Round Table Restaurant at Manila Doctor's and from there to the Floating Restaurant at Makati Medical. So those of you who are hit by an attack of nostalgia can head for the cafeteria at the hospital to relive your childhood memories!

The educated heart

YOUNG BLOOD

Ivy Regina B. Montesines

We want to know what the young are thinking about. What are their thoughts on current issues? We welcome contributions from the twentysomething and below.—Ed.

TEACHING children may sound like child's play, but most teachers consider their job a highly demanding and sensitive one. Attached to it is a tacit mission to educate not just the mind but the heart as well.

My young students come from different family backgrounds, races, cultures and religions, but they have one thing in common: a pure and innocent heart. The heart of a child is a vessel waiting to be filled with all the goodness and strength he needs as he grows up to face increasing responsibilities to God, to humanity and to himself. This is why aside from teaching children to read, write, count and appreciate the wonders of science, I believe a teacher is also duty-bound to help their parents and guardians in educating their hearts. If the heart is neglected, there is the risk that doubt, distrust and fear will fill it. Then the child will decide to take charge of his life because he is fearful and distrustful of others, especially of people more powerful than him, like his parents, guardians, elders, teachers and government leaders.

What is an educated heart? It is the wellspring of goodness which brings forth kindness, good manners, courtesy and consideration or respect for others. Going to the best schools or universities does not guarantee that the heart will get the best possible education. Even unschooled persons can acquire it. It is visible in a street sweeper who does his job well because he thinks of the welfare of pedestrians and motorists; in an ambulant vendor who greets his customers in a respectful tone; in a farmer who shares his produce with the needy anonymously; in a jeepney driver who observes road courtesy; in an out-of-school youth who opens the door for a person with disability or gives his seat to an elderly lady.

Sadly there are many around us who do exactly the opposite: office employees who mindlessly litter the streets with cigarette butts and empty soft-drink cans; college graduates who refuse to give their elders the time of day; convent-bred girls who snicker or glare at people with physical defects; men in high places whose idea of having fun is telling obscene jokes about women.

The act of giving gives a clue to the condition of one's heart. From our early years, we learn that in giving, "it is the thought, not the cost, that counts." But there are situations where the cost does count. One example is the matron who showers her friends with pricey gifts. For her needy kin, however, her usual Christmas giveaways consist of old clothes, used pairs of shoes with missing laces, planners that are stained from age, tarnished custom jewelry, and other items she has to junk to clear her closets. On the other hand, there is the rich lady who goes out of her way to visit her less fortunate relations to bring good cheer and share with them her material blessings to meet their needs.

Children with educated hearts can teach us that nuggets of happiness can come from ordinary acts of kindness we do. One time, a little girl gave me a small silk-covered box containing a butterfly filigree. "I chose it myself, Teacher," she beamed with pride. After the class, the mother told me that her daughter had indeed plucked it herself from their Christmas tree because it was her favorite and she wanted me to keep it. To me that was a perfect example of elegant giving.

The elegance of giving was also demonstrated by the young lady who could not afford to give an expensive wedding present to her best friend. She knew that her friend was set on learning how to cook, so she collected kitchen-tested recipes from her mother and aunts, wrote them neatly on index cards, and arranged them artistically in a wooden box. The newlyweds considered her gift as a true gem among the expensive gifts they received.

Expressing genuine gratitude is something that an educated heart raises to an art. A man who had just lost his job received an inspirational book from a relative abroad. Right away, he sent the giver a thank-you letter. Months later, he sent him another letter saying that he had a new job and that the book helped him gain a brighter outlook in life. If that isn't heartfelt thanksgiving, what is?

There is also this lady journalist who, while battling breast cancer, takes time to reply to letters, text and e-mail messages from well-wishers because she believes that with every good wish, one gives something of oneself.

Making life a little lighter for ordinary workers is another trait of an educated heart. It can be a simple gesture, like politely acknowledging a business letter from a salesman, even if his proposal cannot be accepted, giving an itinerant shoeshine boy a bottle of cold drink, or putting your empty cups and Styrofoam plates in the trash box after a fast-food meal to ease the busboys' workload. You would never know how a small deed of kindness can lift up the spirit of someone who is struggling with poverty.

What may be the Filipino equivalent of having an educated heart is "*may modo.*" *Modo* comes from *modales*, the Spanish word for manners. "*No modales,*" our Spanish neighbors would say of a person who showed no consideration for the feelings and rights of others.

It is easy to spot the heart that lacks education. It always maneuvers to get ahead of others in line, on the road, in a crowded rest room, at the food service counter, and other places where courtesy is an unwritten rule. It growls on the telephone, snaps at customers who ask for a discount, slams the door on traveling salesmen, makes doormats of people, refuses to honor commitments without explanation, gossips viciously or relishes vicious gossips, and grabs credit from others.

From my experience as a teacher, I know that each person is gifted with native wisdom and the capacity for kindness and goodness. One does not have to be a statesman, preacher or civic leader to be able to bring hope and bring about positive changes within one's own sphere of influence. By educating our hearts, we can raise the level of self-esteem, hope and faith of people around us—this can only make us better persons as well.

Ivy Regina B. Montesines, 27, is a licensed nutritionist-dietitian and teaches at a child development center in Metro Manila.

NOTICE TO YOUNGBLOOD CONTRIBUTORS:

If you are sending your contributions by e-mail, please address it to youngblood@inquirer.com.ph together with your address and information about your age and the school, course and year you're enrolled in or if employed, the position you're holding and the company you work with.

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Poverty: the mother of all 'jueteng'

JUETENG has dominated the front pages of newspapers for weeks now. President Macapagal-Arroyo has denied receiving a single centavo from *jueteng*. Her No. 1 adversary, Sen. Panfilo Lacson could only raise his eyebrows. Police chiefs in the Bicol region have been sacked for their failure to curb the illegal numbers game, while dozens of *"kubradors"* (bet collectors) have been rounded up. Presidential warnings have been echoed and lawmakers have vowed to conduct, yet again, another inquiry.

But still *jueteng* exists. *Tuloy ang bola.* (The show goes on.)

I was born and raised in a remote town in Batangas where *jueteng* has become a way of life. Morning, noon and night, you hear the same question: *"Anong tumama?"* (What's the winning combination numbers)?

As a child, I had no idea that *jueteng* was illegal. Everytime a relative wins, people would troop to his house and ask for *"balato."* Everybody felt like a winner including the *kubrador* who automatically got a percentage from the winnings. Even us, toddlers, were unwittingly encouraged then to gamble. I remember our uncles and aunts often asking us. "Loi, *anong tatama? Magsabi ka ng numero, bilis."* (Give me a number combination, quick.) And I had fun enumerating numbers from 1 to 37.

But as I grew older, I realized why *jueteng* existed and continues to exist in our town: it's because of poverty. Bereft of adequate education and a better means to survive, people turn to *jueteng* operators for "employment."

A sixth-class municipality like ours doesn't have much to offer for job-seekers. Either the jobless hunt for one in Manila or poverty will haunt them forever.

It all boils down to economics. Thus, my heart goes out to those lowly bet collectors who have been jailed for merely striving to feed their families, albeit illegally.

These are trying times indeed. And not everyone is blessed with the affluence to stay in a luxurious Las Vegas hotel or fly to Singapore when he can't stand the heat in Manila.

The government should provide jobs for the unemployed. The battle against *jueteng* or *masiao* will amount to nothing if thousands are being deprived of their only means to live a decent life.

By the way, a text message from my sister in Batangas just came in. Asked if *jueteng* still operates in our town after Ms Arroyo's declaration of all-out war against it, she replied, *"May bola pa. Patago nga lang."* (The *jueteng* draws continue; except that they're done covertly.)

—LOI R. LANDICHO,
8F Jacinta Bldg. 2, Edsa,
Guadalupe, Makati

A tribute to Inday Purit

I CANNOT remember when NVM and I first met Purita Kalaw Ledesma. Among the first memories of our one-on-one contacts was our dinner (NVM and myself) at the Ledesma residence facing Dewey Boulevard (now Roxas Boulevard). From Purita that evening, I learned to enjoy avocado laced with *"leche condensada."*

The next venue of our dinner with Purita was in her home, Times Street, Quezon City. She had begun to give us pieces of art work, prints by local and foreign artists. NVM and I were more into literature and writing, one reason we do not have a collection of paintings. But I must have received some exposure to the environment that surrounded Purita's artistic persona. (NVM and I never knew she was also a businesswoman.) When we were away for more that 20 years in California, I took summer classes in Chinese brush painting from a Chinese lady painter. I don't know if Purita knew that.

It was to her Dasmariñas home where I proudly brought Mary Lopez, wife of Salvador P. Lopez, the president of the University of the Philippines then. I told Mary that we could call on Purita anytime and she would willingly be a donor to Mary's UP project, Children's Playground, which now includes a PAUW Child Care Center.

When NVM and I came home from California for a short visit to UP to launch his book, "Bread of Salt," which was printed in the University of Washington Press, I made sure to write Purita to come to Balay Kalinaw in UP, and she came.

Purita also honored NVM and Dr. Fred Lagmay, who was Wally's professor in psychology, with a party in her Dasmariñas home. Food was flown in from Bacolod. There were other guests, but I remember Eva Estrada Kalaw and Rod Perez the most.

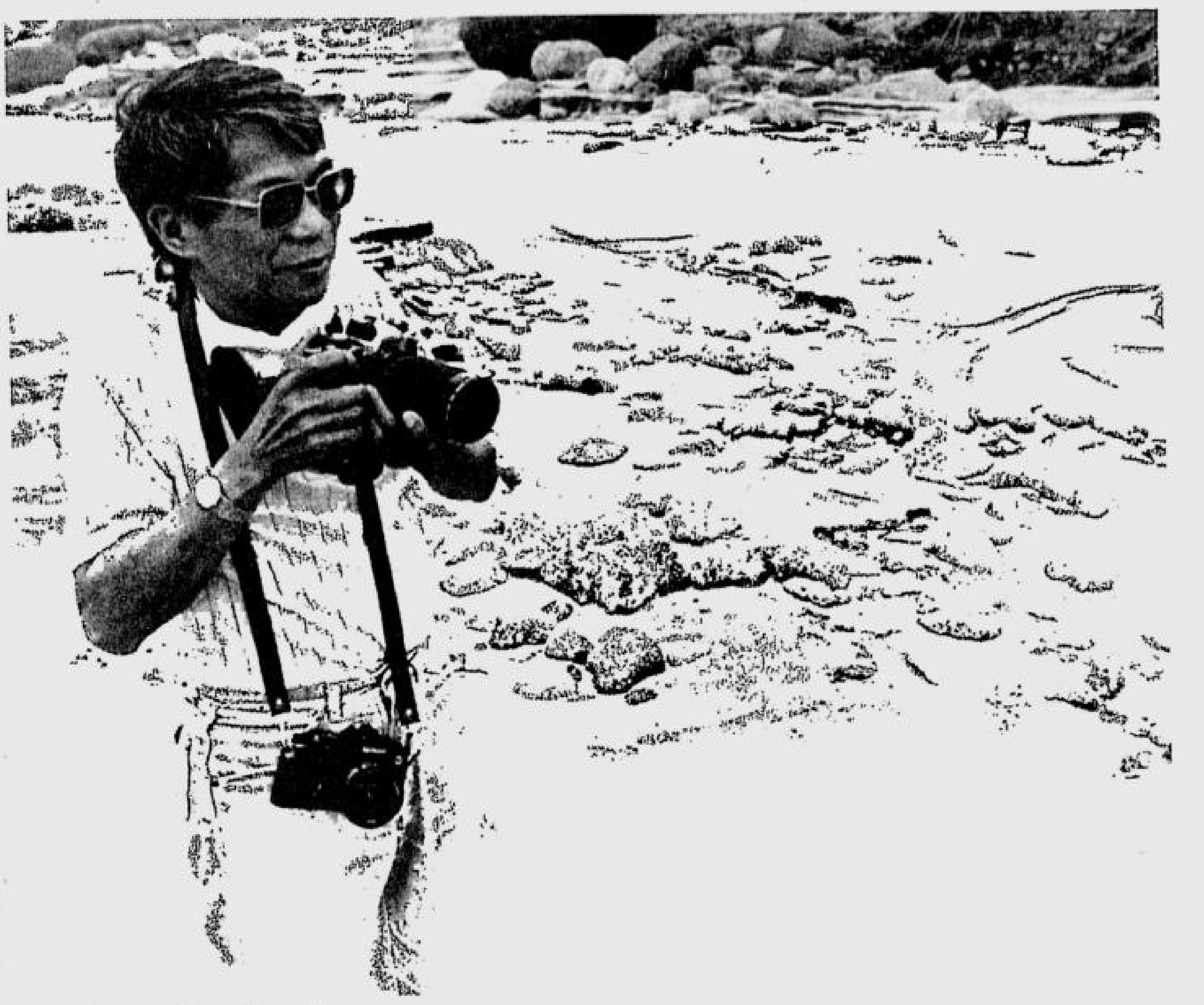
But the occasion that made NVM proud as a chosen friend was when Purita asked him to be a guest of honor at the launching of her book, "And Life Goes On" at Ayala Center. NVM was happy to see an old friend, Minister Narciso Reyes, who was in a wheel chair. I remember meeting Anita Magsaysay-Ho and other painters and writers. NVM called Purita's book a landmark, not just an autobiography, but a cultural history of the years gone, of early American years. When I asked Purita why she chose NVM as special guest, all she would say was, "NVM is a good man."

In the mid-1990s, NVM and I had a Mass celebrated and a birthday party held as a sort of *despedida* for our son, Nim, who was invited to go to Rome by the Jesuits. Of course, we had to invite Purita. She came to attend the Mass. She couldn't come to the reception. Her asthma bothered her. That was the start of failing health.

We never saw her again. We came home to stay in 1998. NVM died in 1999. Now and then I would ask about Purita. I would send her some cards. I even asked Wally to read my last note to her.

Goodbye and rest in peace, Inday Purit.

—NARITA GONZALEZ,
nvminq@yahoo.com



PUNONGBAYAN on an inspection tour

An outstanding man

DR. RAYMUNDO S. Punongbayan was an outstanding man as attested by his selfless service to the nation, by his dedication to his craft and by his humble disposition.

The National Land Use Committee (NLUC), chaired by the National Economic and Development Authority, was privileged to have had him as an active member. Ever supportive of NLUC activities, he was always ready to provide the necessary technical expertise and resources in NLUC endeavors. In the formulation of the National Framework for Physical Planning: 2001-2030, for instance, he led and organized a group of experts from the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology in the preparation, standardization and printing of the required maps, and wrote the sections on natural hazards and disaster preparedness.

The NLUC secretariat truly enjoyed working with him not only because he "laymanizes" and injects humor to technical explanations but also because he was very approachable, accommodating and fun to be with.

To quote the citation that NLUC chair Augusto B. Santos presented to him on June 17, 2002: "We will always remember his wisdom and down-to-earth manner in smothering the fires while resolving tremulous land issues even beyond the call of duty."

—MARCELINA E. BACANI,
director, Neda-RDCS
and NLUC Secretary,
mebacani@neda.gov.ph

Abolish Congress instead of MMDA

WE know that the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority under the leadership of Bayani Fernando made big changes in Metro Manila. Undisciplined drivers and vendors may dislike him, but as the saying goes in Tagalog *"Trabaho lang , walang personalan."* (It's all work, nothing personal.)

Rep. Teodoro Locsin's bill seeking to abolish the MMDA is understandable because he is an ally of Makati Mayor Jejomar Binay. Fernando is trying his best to improve traffic and cleanliness in Metro Manila. Millions of Filipinos would rather see Congress (which is doing nothing but waste taxpayers' money), rather than the MMDA, abolished. Metro Manila mayors are only after the votes come next election; it is not for the good of the voters. MMDA has done a lot for Metro Manila, while Congress has done nothing.

—BAYANI MAGTANGGOL,
bayanimagtanggol@yahoo.com

Still unheard

THIS is in reaction to the reported rift in the ranks of the Senate minority over Sen. Juan Ponce Enrile's membership in the Commission on Appointments. (PDI, 5/25/05)

The disagreement may be seen as a testament to a healthy democracy. However, voiceless and ordinary citizens cannot help but feel frustrated. The rift started at the CA hearing on Mike Defensor's confirmation as secretary of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources.

A number of communities and organizations expressed their opposition to Defensor's confirmation. Their objection was based on his actions and behavior as DENR's top honcho, as well as his ineffective handling of the Quezon-Aurora tragedy, his obvious support for the aggressive promotion of mining, and lately, his attacks on legitimate NGOs and Church-based organizations working with communities affected by mining.

This disagreement among the minority senators may be a tactical ploy to block Defensor's confirmation. However, it has shifted attention away from an essential issue which is: the communities and local organizations affected by logging and mining do not believe Defensor can do a credible and effective job as DENR secretary. And to this day, they have not been heard.

—JAYBEE GARGANERA,
programs coordinator,
PhilDHRRA,
programs@phildhrra.org

Lito Lapid's chutzpah

"CHUTZPAH" is derived from the Hebrew word *"huspah,"* meaning "supreme self-belief and confidence." If I am to use it in a sentence, I'd say: "Lito Lapid is teeming with chutzpah!" The Philippine Daily Inquirer should be commended for its May 20 editorial, "Sullied and surly," which spelled out the reasons why Lapid should inhibit himself from any Senate inquiry on *jueteng*. The bottomline is, this person has no integrity to conduct an unbiased investigation. Notice that I do not address him as "senator?" If he had inhibited himself and shown any form of *delicadeza*, I probably would have tried to show a little more respect for him. But, you're right, he just does not get it! There's not even the slightest indication that he acknowledges his incapacity as a rookie in the Senate. Like I said, "teeming with chutzpah!" *Salamat* PDI. Keep on writing poignant editorials!

—BENNETT CACES,
caces@pharm.sunysb.edu

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Can the Arroyo administration stop jueteng?

maybe if she focus first on her family, she might stop it.
—ray Gutierrez, 28, *metro manila*

gloria must beg her husband to stop first.
—Bernard Dujali, *Panabo City*

NO! Arroyo adminstration can stop "nothing". They cant even stop corruption within their office, jueteng pa kaya!
—Roselie V. Tutor, 24, *Tacurong City*

i believe stopping jueteng is FUTILE. legalizing it is a more practical move to benefit all sides.
—mary joan preclaro, 24, *antipolo*

YES but d Pres. shld take d lead f she is really determined 2do it. The president has all d power. der is always hope.
—Loida Buaquina, 31, *negros*

No coz even d minor problems dey cant solve, how much more jueteng, eh halos lahat ng tao yan ang ikinabubuhay sa family nila.
—josephine esguerra, 26, *bacoor, cavite*

Ibitin nyo ako ng patiwarik kung mapapahinto ni GMA ang jueteng.
—L. Decena Martin, *San Agustin, Isabela*

I believe dat d current admin can stop jueteng bcoz it SEEMS they are d ones controlling it. Look, in 1 day, 3 regions jueteng free, wow.
—Neil Jerome, 16, *Laguna*

Its hardly a yes bcoz f dis admin. cud rily stop juetng, it shudve bin done 2 or 3yrs ago, dba?
—Kirk Z. Dumago, *CAGAYAN de ORO City*

no, U can't stop jueteng unles d pcso lotto stil on business, jueteng s base on a lotto in d last 2 no. of swerte tres or four digit.
—jol, 35, *sarangani*

No she can't stop jueteng paano matitigl, eh kung mismong govt. ang sangkot. nagpapatawa ata cya eh..
—Jaz Ticman, 23, *Q.C.*

No way can arroyo adm. stop jueteng coz it has been a filipino way of life especially d poor
—Erwin Abes, 46, *Calapan city*

No. Jueteng 4 (poor) people has been a way of life. It has been in their system 4 decades now.
—Alexander A. Lebantino, 27, *Pampanga*

ABSOLUTELY! iF GMA is dtermined 2 stop jueteng operations den it can be stopped. Action is better than lip service.
—dr jessie albeus, 32, *naga cty*

Anak ng jueteng?!!!

Yes. if only da administratiOn s willing & wil cOncntrate to stop it.
—Aureen M. Zerna, 24, *Tanjay Neg. Or.*

YES! By bleeding them dry.
—EddieK, *Morong*

Arroyo is known for her political payback and loyalty to her friends n family so i dont believe she can stop jueteng.
—ronnie que, *manila*

i dont think n e2 ay mpa2hinto ng ksalukuyng admnstrsyon sapgkt e2 ay 2lad ng MALALANG SAKIT na mahirap nang gAmutiN.. **—jeffrey dumanjog, 19,** *cotabato*

d hardest questions 2 answer r d questions dat r answerable by Yes or No. /Good luck na lang kay GMA! bwahahahahahaha!!!
—tes obana, 24, *polangui*

probably, its a NO. it cant even solve simpler problems lyk bank robberies or murder cases, how much more a Complex problem like jueteng?
—Charmie Arianne Z. Dumago, 13, *Cag. de Oro City*.

I think PGMA may stop d jueteng by compromising its ally gamers thru a max. implementation of P.D.1602 & by d cooperation of d people
—Jayson Ching, 18, *Manila*

POSIBLE- iF EVRYBODY would CO-OPERATE, KaHIT sino pa NAKAUPO, BASTA may DETERMINATION, LALO Sa Side ng GOVT. OFFICIALS.
—noemiLunar, 30, *bats.*

yes they can but i dont know if they would
—fritz emmanuel gatchalian, 15, *taguig*

NO! jueteng is olredy a part of our society and its problems, unless govt does somthing 4 d society and corruption.
—james martinez, 27, *malabon city*

No, kahit sino pres. Matagal na isue yan, anjan ang pera.
—roberto sepe, 37, *pasay city*

no govt since d phils gained its independence succeeded in quashing jueteng as it has become well part of d fil culture.
—Vladimir C. Vega, 45, *Sorsogon City*

I have doubts towards dis campaign bcuz dey jst get the slaves, not the masters, useless din.
Glenn Ang, 11, *san juan*

d arroyo admin- can stop all forms of illegal gambling. When God said stop, d rain stopped.
—alex caoile, 49, *aringay, La Union*

YES! GMA just needs to handle it with an iron fist. plus it would help if we all pitch in some support.
—rosemary melitante, 42, *zamboanga city*

No, it has been a way of life, & poor Pinoys' hope out of poverty.
—eduardo viola, 49, *qc*

No, sa hirap ng buhay ngayn! Lalong dadami yang juetengero lalong sasakit ang ulo ni Arroyo!
—gay tupas, *digos city*

NO. its hard 2 stop if its already a way of life. past admin do it already, it closes 4 months, then reopens agen.
—Bern Agbayani, 32, *valencia city*

Hindi kayang ihinto ng Arroyo administration ang jueteng dahil "walang himala!"
—Agnes Paulino, 60, *Manila*

it could if d section of d church led by Bishop Cruz & other groups could sustain breathing on d nape of d government.
—Raul G Sarmiento, *City of San Fernando*

yes, with one sentence clear-cut instruction to stop jueteng address to pnp chief and dilg secretary, signed by the president.
—mar, 54, *nueva ecija*

Yes, it can but does it want to? there lies d real score. It has been in power for 4yrs but has done nothing 2 stop d game, it even flourished.
—Gilbert B. Cruz, 28, *Pasig*

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Graft prober of Batangas shot dead

VAL HANDUMON

BEACH EXERCISE
Members of Task Force Stingray, an elite Marine unit, conduct security exercises on Boracay Island.

CAMP VICENTE LIM, Laguna—The resident Ombudsman of the Batangas provincial government was ambushed and killed by two unidentified armed men on his way to work in the downtown area of Batangas City early yesterday.

Chief Insp. Florendo Saligao, Batangas City police deputy chief, identified the victim as Guillermo Gamo, 57, of Barangay Concepcion and the local antigraft officer of the Batangas capitol.

Saligao said the victim was on board his red Toyota Corolla car (NJL 208) when the gunmen, on board a Kawasaki motorcycle, waylaid him near the memorial park at about 6:30 a.m. along the boundaries of barangays Alangilan and Balagtas.

He said police investigation revealed that the assailants had trailed the victim's car from a traffic intersection in Barangay Ibaan.

"When the (killers) saw the chance, they opened fire at the hapless victim as he approached a gasoline station," Saligao said in a mobile phone interview.

Police said the attackers had .45 cal. pistols.

Saligao said they were still investigating if the killing had something to do with the victim's job.

He said they would check if the victim was handling any high-profile case before he was killed.

Gamo was one of the reliable sources of information of the INQUIRER on anomalies of certain government officials.

He was supposed to meet with the INQUIRER today to provide information on the P500-million beautification project at the provincial capitol, which allegedly did not undergo the bidding process and was awarded to a construction firm allegedly owned by Gov. Armando Sanchez.

Gamo was also investigating the alleged scam in the clothing allowance of the provincial government employees, a project that was reportedly awarded to a relative of Sanchez.

Sanchez flatly denied having knowledge of the killing of Gamo.

He laughed off reports that he was a subject of an ongoing investigation being undertaken by Gamo's office regarding the alleged P500-million beautification project of the provincial capitol building.

Sanchez said he actually had no knowledge of the project.

"There is no truth to that. Mr. Gamo is not investigating me or my office for that supposed project. We don't have that kind of project because we don't have that kind of money," he said.

Sanchez said he had no reason to order the killing of anybody, especially Gamo, who he described as a close friend and fraternity brother at Batangas Varsitarians.

"Mr. Gamo was a friend and a fraternity brother. Why would I want him killed?" he said. *Marlon Ramos, with a report from Mei Magsino-Lubis, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

Ex-antidrug chief shot in back dies in hospital

DAVAO CITY—The former chief of the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency in Central Mindanao, whose shooting Friday morning in Sta. Cruz town in Davao del Sur remains a mystery, died Sunday dawn due to complications in his vital internal organs.

Supt. Efren Alcuizar, who was recently reassigned at the Southern Mindanao police command, died at around 2:30 a.m. Sunday while undergoing treatment at the operating room of the Davao Doctor's Hospital.

Alcuizar took a bullet in the back which is still a puzzle to both police investigators and those present during the shooting.

Senior Insp. Danilo Obogon, chief of the Sta. Cruz police station, said there were no witnesses.

But Obogon said the attack could be an accident as it was possible one of the victim's two .45 cal. pistols accidentally went off.

Alcuizar, his wife Candice, son, and two housemaids had dropped by a durian fruit stall along the national highway in Barangay Tuban in Sta. Cruz on Friday morning when the shooting happened.

But his wife suspected that the bullet was shot from a yellow Crosswind vehicle that had been tailing them from Davao City.

Supt. Ernesto Velasco, Davao del Sur acting provincial police chief, said they have two witnesses who could attest that no other persons were around at the time Alcuizar was shot.

Velasco said Rosalia Elona, who owns the fruit stand, and her nephew, Leonyl Elona, told investigators that it was a case of accidental firing. *Anthony S. Allada, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

Baguio dads seek subsidy to stop abuse of suspects

BAGUIO CITY—The city council has offered to subsidize the lawyers' fees of crime suspects to help shield them from police brutality and the intrusion of reporters and television cameras.

Councilor Erdolfo Balajadia, former Baguio prosecutor, said human rights lawyers have been disturbed by the frequency by which the local police display suspected criminals before complainants and reporters.

"In many cases, police offer the suspects to their complainants for a beating [because they are] in front of the cameras. If these people had lawyers, then this display of brutality won't happen," Balajadia said.

Councilor Jose Molintas, a human rights lawyer, authored the proposed ordinance allocating up to P200,000 annually to guarantee detainees "competent and independent counsel" upon their arrest.

Balajadia said the proposed ordinance complements the law that requires arresting officers to inform crime suspects of their rights.

Republic Act 7438 compels law enforcers to inform a suspect, "in a language known to and understood by him, of his rights to remain silent and to have competent and independent counsel, preferably of his own choice, who shall at all times be allowed to confer privately with the person arrested, detained or under custodial investigation."

These are rights that can only be waived in front of a lawyer, the Supreme Court said in its guidelines defining admissible court evidence.

The court said "neither a [National Bureau of Investigation] agent nor the city legal officer can be considered an independent counsel for this purpose."

Balajadia said he had encountered violations of detainees' rights during his stint as prosecutor, "although there is no trend yet for me to speak of."

"Police often claim that they could not reach any public lawyers to assist their suspects, but I always suspect that it is their way of [stretching detention] to compel suspects to admit their [alleged guilt] or to extract more evidence," he said.

"I have been criticized for dropping cases filed by these police officers, but I had to take both sides [of the coin] and human rights play a big part [in my decisions as prosecutor]," Balajadia said. *Vincent Cabreza, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

Strong and resilient at 36

Situated in the municipality that will later become a city and eventually the country's central business district, Makati Medical Center was the realization of the collective vision of its Founding Fathers renowned in their respective fields of specialization—Drs. Constantino P. Manahan, Jose Y. Fores, Mariano M. Alimurung, Carlos L. Sevilla, Romeo H. Gustilo and Manuel C. Fernandez.

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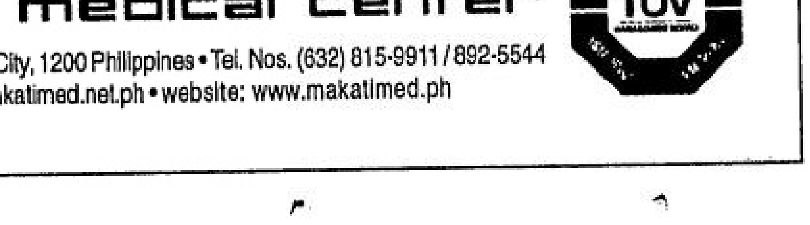

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TÜV

Mayors summon colleague who bared 'jueteng' take

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO—The Pampanga Mayors League (PML) has summoned Apalit Mayor Tirso Lacanilao to a meeting this week to shed light on his disclosure that he, like other officials in Pampanga, was accepting money from *jueteng* operators.

A PML official said Lacanilao's statements had peeved the mayors.

Lacanilao, the official said, also claimed that some mayors not only took *jueteng* payoffs but also asked for "advances" or payments ahead of the weekly schedules.

Lacanilao made the disclosure during an interview at local radio station dwRW on Friday.

"[Lacanilao] came to the station. He volunteered the information," Fernando Pangan, dwRW station manager, said of the circumstance surrounding Lacanilao's appearance in the morning talk show.

The mayor's statements came a week after the PML vowed support for the all-out war of President Macapagal-Arroyo, their *kabalen* (province mate), against illegal gambling.

The PML's president is Lubao Mayor Dennis Pineda, the only son of suspected *jueteng* lord Rodolfo "Bong" Pineda. The President was one of the principal sponsors in the mayor's wedding.

Candaba Mayor Jerry Pelayo, spokesperson of the PML, declined to describe the reactions of Pineda, who is in the United States, or of his colleagues to Lacanilao's statements.

"We'd like to tell [our sentiments] to him straight. We're suspending judgment until we talk to him. For all we know, Tirso was just joking," Pelayo said.

Reached on Monday after two days of evading interviews from local reporters, Lacanilao told the INQUIRER that he was in his right mind when he "honestly spoke" on the issue.

"I did not know if I hurt anybody [with my statements] but I simply told my problem as a mayor. I spoke in good faith. I wanted national officials to understand the plight of local executives," Lacanilao said. *Tonette Orejas, PDI Central Luzon Desk*

TOKEN AFP

British Ambassador to the Philippines Peter Beckingham receives a token from Brig. Gen. Alberto Braganza, Southern Command chief, during the ambassador's visit to the Southcom headquarters in Zamboanga City recently. Britain will send counterterrorism advisers to look into activities of the Jemaah Islamiyah.

ROUNDUP

Couple slain

CALAMBA CITY—A KTV bar manager and her husband were shot dead by still unidentified men in Barangay Bukal here at dawn on Thursday. Police identified the victims as Rowena Borenes, 25, officer-in-charge of Sanae KTV Bar, and her husband Crisostomo Jamer, 30, jobless and native of Nagcarlan town. Both were residing at St. Agustine Village, Barangay Lawa here. SPO2 Joel Balawed and SPO1 Gabriel Noguerra said that at about 4:30 a.m., May 26, the victims were headed for home on board a motorcycle when they were shot at close range with .45 cal. pistols by passengers of a white van a few meters from their bar. The killers immediately fled toward Crossing. Bystanders brought the victims to the J. P. Rizal Memorial Hospital where they died. ***Romulo Ponte, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau***

12 drug suspects held

STA. CRUZ, Laguna—Police arrested 12 suspects in a series of anti-illegal drug operations in the province from May 14 to May 27. The suspects, according to police reports, were caught either in possession or in control of drug paraphernalia and various amounts of suspected shabu in plastic sachets. ***Romulo Ponte, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau***

Army officer back

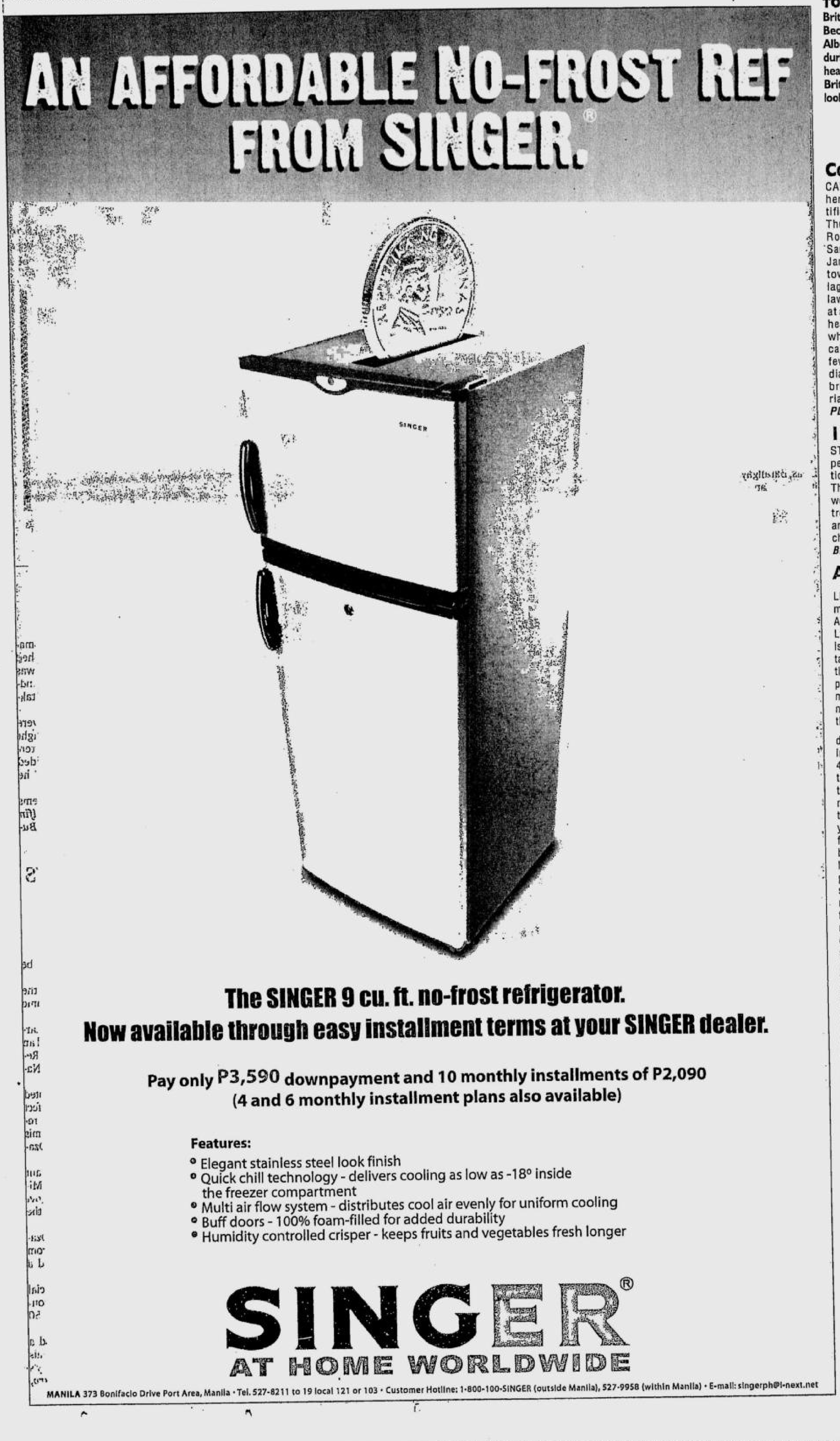
FIDELINO

LEGAZPI CITY—Former New People's Army prisoner 1st Lt. Ronaldo Fidelino is now back in military service—this time, to promote the peace and development projects of the national government through information dissemination. Fidelino was the commanding officer of the Charlie Company of the 42nd Infantry Battalion based in Tinambac town in Camarines Sur when he was captured by the NPA's Romulo Jallores Command in March 2004. He was held in captivity for six months and freed in August last year. He is now a civil-military operations officer. Fidelino said he deliberately chose to be a CMO staff member because he would like to help educate and even convince the people living in far-flung areas and the NPA supporters that the programs being implemented by the government were intended for their upliftment and economic development. He also intends to convince and encourage people in remote barangay to stop supporting the communist rebels and their programs. Fidelino even asked members of the Communist Party of the Philippines to quit the movement. He stressed that if the talents and intelligence of communist rebels would be shared with government officials, they could help the country become progressive. ***Michael Jauclan, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau***

Health cards distributed

GENERAL SANTOS CITY—A mining firm exploring copper and gold deposits in Tampakan, South Cotabato distributed PhilHealth cards to B'laan natives residing within the project area. Two hundred natives received the cards during the launching of the health insurance program on Thursday initiated by Sagittarius Mines Inc. (SMI). The company has adopted education as a flagship program for natives residing in areas affected by its mining activities. Rolando Doria, overall project coordinator, claimed that the company realized the need for health care benefits for *lumad* in the area. Most of the residents had depended on natural herbs and traditional knowledge to cure ailments due to lack of basic health services in the area.

Aquiles Zonio, PDI Mindanao Bureau



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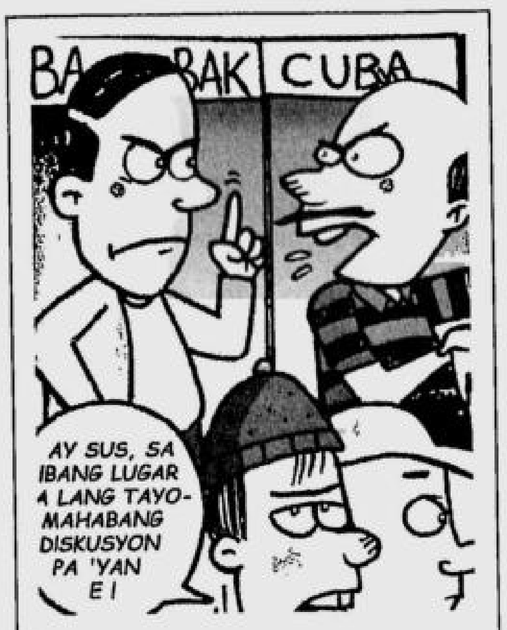
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CUBA
AY SUS, SA IBANG LUGAR A LANG TAYO- MAHAHABANG DISKUSYON PA 'YAN E!

Liquor ban revives boundary dispute

KAPANGAN, Benguet—Three barangays here—Balakbak, Beling-belis and Central—are proud to claim that they are the town's most peaceful villages for enacting an ordinance that bans drinking and sale of liquor.

But recently, Balakbak ran into trouble when three establishments decided to defy the ordinance by insisting on selling liquor and allowing their customers to drink.

The reason, claimed owners of Joma's *sari-sari* (variety) store, Remy's store and *Boteng's sari-sari* store, is that their businesses are located outside Balakbak and within Cuba, an adjacent village.

Cuba does not have a liquor ban ordinance.

As a result, the dispute has revived a boundary scuffle between officials of Cuba and Balakbak, Mayor Rogelio Leon said.

Leon said he was at a loss over whether to issue the three stores business permits to sell liquor.

He said the dispute was still unresolved at the town council.

The store owners—Jona Albis, Remy Semin and Geoffrey Boteng—appreciated the purpose of Balakbak's ordinance, but they said their stores were not part of the barangay, Leon said.

Balakbak barangay chair Alex Mencio said the three stores are within his barangay's jurisdiction. Hence, he said, they must abide by the ordinance.

Cuba barangay chair Andiso Paterson objected, saying the boundary problem must be settled first.

Leon said that despite the boundary conflict, the liquor ban ordinances in the three barangays had helped improve the local peace and order situation.

Senior Insp. Gabriel Pablo, town police chief, said the ordinances eased a lot of patrol work for his 16-member police force. The mountainous town has 15 barangays.

"There are no more shouting, physical injury cases or other forms of public disturbance caused by drinking liquor in the three areas, particularly at night," Pablo said.

Balakbak, Beling-belis and Central approved their ordinances in 2001 with identical provisions—that all neighborhood stores are prohibited from selling liquor and from allowing their customers to drink. *Delmar Cariño, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

ILOCOS TOWN STANDOFF

Woman stopped from blowing up market

LAOAG CITY—Policemen on Monday foiled an attempt of a 25-year-old woman to explode a hand grenade she was holding during a 15-minute standoff that began at the public market of Bacarra, Ilocos Norte and ended at the town hall a few meters away.

The woman, a former sales clerk at a department store, turned up at the market at 8:30 a.m. Monday and took out a grenade while she was in the middle of what appeared to be a heated conversation with another person on her mobile phone, police said.

Dressed in jogging pants and red sweatshirt, the woman, described by police as "emotionally disturbed," was overheard by market goers as saying, "I will blow up this grenade if you don't show up."

Insp. Constante Medina, Bacarra police chief, said policemen went to the public market upon receiving calls for assistance.

They, however, caught up with the woman at the nearby plaza in front of the municipal hall.

"She retreated to the town hall [when we arrived] and started climbing up and down the stairs causing panic among [town hall] workers," Medina said in a phone interview.

He said government workers rushed out of the building while others locked themselves in their offices when they saw the woman running on the hallway.

Medina said he ordered his men to retreat when the woman started brandishing the grenade at policemen who tried to get near her.

"I instructed a sniper to disable the woman by shooting her leg should she refuse to give up the grenade she was holding," he said.

Medina said he started negotiating with the woman to surrender when she reached an area near the police station.

At some point during the negotiation, policemen who were positioned behind the woman grabbed her and snatched the grenade.

Medina said they detained the woman and asked government doctors to examine her.

Investigation showed that the woman was waiting for her boyfriend who supposedly promised to show up at the market and pay her P40,000 that he had borrowed.

The woman went berserk when her boyfriend refused to meet her and pay up his debt.

The woman told police that she got the grenade from her boyfriend's apartment.

According to Medina, the woman may have been in a state of emotional distress.

Policemen were preparing charges of illegal possession of explosives and alarm and scandal against the woman. *Cristina Arzadon, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

New PMA graduate killed in reb attack

TANDAG, Surigao del Sur—Two soldiers, including a fresh graduate of the Philippine Military Academy, were killed, while another was wounded when suspected New People's Army rebels attacked an Army detachment in Lanuza town on Sunday night.

Killed were Lt. Peter Vinluan and Pfc. Marlon Dahunan, both of the 58th Infantry Battalion.

Wounded was Pfc. Nasser Arbane.

Lt. Mike Tanggote, 58th IB spokesperson, said the rebel attack was in retaliation to the Army's surprise attack on an NPA camp in Sitio Libas, Barangay Sibahay in Lanuza on Thursday night.

Two rebels were killed during the clash. *Bert Pacate, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

EDWIN BACASMAS

VANTAGE POINT
Residents of Guiuan town in Eastern Samar line up on a hill to get a better vantage point with which to view the arrival of President Macapagal-Arroyo during Ms Arroyo's recent visit to the remote town.

Captors release former top NPA leader; military cleared

LUCENA CITY—The captors of former New People's Army leader Ramoncito "Monet" Garcia released him unharmed past midnight yesterday in San Pablo City.

But the former top NPA officer in the Bondoc Peninsula, who was snatched Saturday morning, absolved the military.

"I think my captors are not military men despite hearing some of them address someone as 'sir'," Garcia said in an interview at the Grand Central Bus terminal here, two hours after he was freed.

"Compared to my experience with military men that abducted me two years ago in Manila, this time, although I'm sure they were also government men, I could sense that they were from a different group, not from the military," he said.

Garcia said his captors tried to extract from him information on the underground movement.

"They were obviously fishing for information. But they didn't get anything from me. Besides, it has been 10 years now since I left the movement to raise my family. I have nothing to tell them," he said between puffs of cigarettes, still shaken by the abduction.

His captors did not harm him, according to Garcia.

He said he noticed that on Sunday, the group suddenly changed the way they dealt with him.

"They began to treat me lightly. I didn't know why. But I could sense that they were going to release me. It brought me hope to see my family again."

When told that the INQUIRER reported his abduction on Sunday, Garcia let out a deep sigh of relief. "Now I know. I heard my abductors talking about a particular news," he recalled.

He said the group also forced him to sign a prepared handwritten document declaring his support for the government.

After he was shoved into a Tamaraw-FX van on the day he was snatched in Mulanay town, Garcia said he was immediately blindfolded and handcuffed. All his personal items were taken.

"After an hour, I knew that we were in the vicinity of Lucena. They brought me to their safe house where my interrogations took place until they decided to set me free in San Pablo City," he said.

Garcia said all his personal items were returned by his abductors. *Delfin Mallari Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

Laguna city council OKs ₱1-M reward for mayor's killers

STA. ROSA CITY—The city council of Sta. Rosa recently approved a P1 million bounty for the immediate capture of the suspects in the killing of Mayor Leon Arcillas.

In its 19th council meeting held on May 16, the council unanimously voted for the allocation of the hefty sum to hasten the investigation and arrest of the mastermind.

The resolution was signed by eight regular members of the council, including presiding officer and Vice Mayor Arlene Arcillas-Nazareno, the daughter of the slain mayor.

It was authored by Councilors Artemio Gomez Jr. and Petronio Factoriza.

The resolution was approved by Arcillas-Nazareno and Mayor Jose Catindig Jr.

It said P500,000 would be awarded to anyone with information that will lead to the identification of the "principal suspects until the case is filed in the court and is given the necessary criminal case number."

The other half of the reward will be given to the informant when the suspects are finally convicted by the court.

The resolution said the reward money will come from the city government's "intelligence fund."

Arcillas, a staunch supporter of President Macapagal-Arroyo, and his security aide, PO2 Erwin Rivera, were gunned down at the hallway of the second floor of the city hall annex moments after he officiated a civil wedding on the morning of May 10.

The Philippine National Police has formed the Special Investigation Task Force Arcillas to head the investigation of the killings.

The task force has tagged communist rebels as primary suspects. The Southern Tagalog-based Melito Glor Command of the communist New People's Army has denied the accusations.

The NPA later pointed to the intelligence unit of the Armed Forces of the Philippines as being behind the killings. *Marlon Ramos, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

1948 law says it's Ozamiz, not Ozamis

OZAMIZ CITY—Now it can be settled.

Based on official records, the correct spelling of this city's name is "Ozamiz."

According to Vice Mayor Carlos Bernad, they have obtained an authenticated photocopy of Republic Act No. 321 from the National Library recently.

RA 321 is the law that granted the city its charter that took effect July 16, 1948. It decreed the renaming of the old town of Misamis in honor of the late Sen. Jose Ozamiz, a World War II hero.

Ozamiz, a son of a migrant from Navarre, Spain, served Misamis Occidental as its first governor and delegate in framing the 1935 Constitution.

A native of Jimenez town, Ozamiz was the lone politician from the province to have clinched a Senate seat.

Bernad said with the official record as basis, the spelling confusion that has lasted for over 50 years would be finally over.

The city council has passed a resolution urging all individuals and institutions to spell the city's name correctly. *Ryan Rosauro, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

New health chief told: Be clear on 'Ligtas Buntis'

By Nestor P. Burgos Jr.
PDI Visayas Bureau

ILOILO CITY—Incoming Health Secretary Francisco Duque III should be clear on his position on the government's "Ligtas Buntis" program and on population issues, said Albay Rep. Edcel Lagman.

"At best, he is ambivalent (on the program). We do not know if he is in favor or against it because he seems to be doing a balancing act," Lagman told reporters here on Friday.

Duque, who will formally replace outgoing Health Secretary Manuel Dayrit, should clearly state whether he is favor of the program, he said.

"(Duque) should be firm and not vacillate on crucial issues like family planning and reproductive health," said Lagman, author of House Bill 3773 or the "Responsible Parenthood and Population Management Act of 2005."

Consultations

Duque earlier said in an INQUIRER report that the program would be first reviewed before the health department would decide if it would be continued.

He said the continuation of the program would also be decided after consultations had been conducted with legislators, Roman Catholic Church leaders and employees of his department.

The Catholic Church has criticized Ligtas Buntis for allegedly promoting artificial family planning in support of the government's birth control program.

Campaign

The Church is also expected to launch a campaign against House Bill 3773, which is expected to be tackled in plenary sessions before Congress adjourns on June 10.

Lagman expressed confidence that the bill would pass the House with the majority of the lawmakers supporting the bill.

"We will closely watch what happens in the Senate," he said.

Expected opposition

He said he expected the Church to oppose the bill. "I only ask them not to misrepresent the facts."

The legislator said he received reports that provisions of the bill had been changed in campaigns being waged by the Catholic Church to block passage of the bill.

"We can differ in our views but don't misrepresent … just tell the truth to the public," said Lagman.

Population management advocates are gearing for a campaign to push for the passage of the bill, said Mia Ventura, deputy executive director of the Population Commission.

She said they wanted to bring out the issues amid the expected campaign of the Church against the bill.

"Their (Church) position is given. We will just continue to provide the public and population management advocates with science-based evidence on the issues," said Ventura.

RP economy shows resilience

From page A1

eral of the National Statistical Coordination Board, said rising prices of oil and consumer goods, lower exports and imports, and a decline in output from the farm and mining sectors dampened economic growth in the first quarter.

"The growth in the economy was carried by the steady increases in services and industry," Virola said.

Even so, the government is hoping to achieve the lower end of its its full-year growth target of 5.3-6.3 percent.

"We expect GDP growth to improve in the coming quarters, especially in the second semester, as agriculture recovers with the onset of rains in El Niño-affected areas," Neri said.

The agriculture department is expecting a 3-4 percent growth for the farm sector for 2005, he added.

"If agriculture grows 4 percent, the economy is likely to attain the low end of the government's full-year growth target, although the weak growth in exports is a downside risk factor," Neri said.

Main driver

The services sector, which makes up 48 percent of GDP, was the main driver of economic growth in the first three months, rising 6.9 percent from a year earlier and a seasonally adjusted 2.6 percent in the first three months of the year.

The growth of the industry sector slowed to 4.2 percent from 4.7 last year. But it shrank a seasonally adjusted 1.2 percent from the previous quarter, its weakest performance in four years, due to a sluggish mining sector.

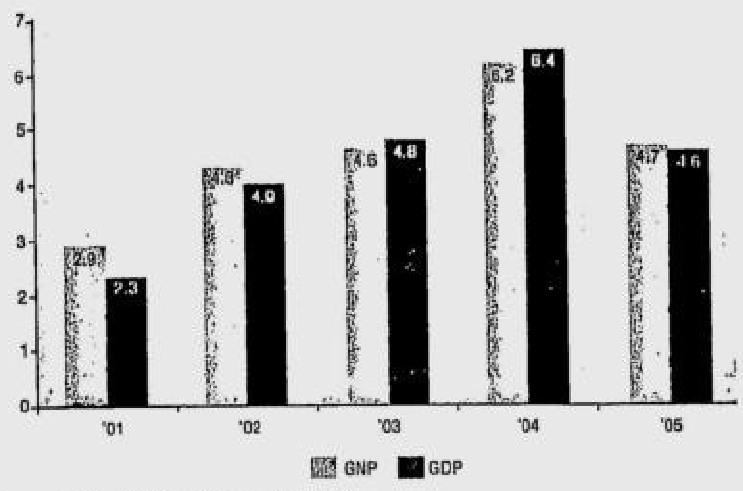
The agriculture sector, which makes up a fifth of GDP, suffered from a series of storms in late 2004 and struggled to recover in the first three months of this year even as the dry El Niño weather phenomenon added to its difficulties.

Neri said the agriculture, fisheries and forestry sector contracted 0.1 percent in the first quarter, a substantial decline from the 8.6-percent growth in the same period last year.

Exports have been sluggish, growing just 3.6 percent in the year through the first quarter, due to faltering demand for Philippine electronic products and other goods.

Despite the slowdown in GDP growth, analysts noted that the Philippine economy showed resilience in the face of high oil prices and a battered farm sector.

GDP & GNP growth rates (1st quarter of 2001 to 2005)



Source: National Statistical Coordination Board

"The markets should be encouraged by the numbers. It was not a big surprise but it was a healthy increase," said David Cohen, director of forecasting at Action Economics in Singapore.

"The agriculture sector was not as big a drag as people had feared," Cohen said.

Jonathan Ravelas, a market strategist at Banco de Oro Universal Bank, said the tide was "changing in favor of the Philippines, especially after the upgrade of the outlook of the sovereign credit ratings."

Last week, Fitch Ratings said it revised its outlook on the Philippines' long-term foreign and local currency ratings to stable from negative following the enactment of several tax measures aimed at reducing the country's yawning budget deficit.

Analysts, however, said the imposition of higher taxes could push growth below target.

GNP growth

The country's gross national product (GNP), which includes income from overseas investments and remittances from overseas Filipino workers, decelerated to 4.7 percent in the first quarter from 6.4 percent during the same period last year.

Net factor income from abroad grew by 6.7 percent, slower than the 7-percent pace in the first quarter of last year.

Neri said oil prices that began rising since the second half of last year had pushed inflation to higher-than expected levels and dampened buying by consumers.

Even so, consumers have been supported by relatives strong flows of remittances from millions of overseas workers, who sent home $2.3 billion in the first three months of this year.

"Inflows from remittances of overseas Filipino workers will support the economy for the rest of the year," said Julian Wee, an economist at IDEAglobal in Singapore.

Neri said reduced government spending in the face of a looming fiscal crisis also contributed to the economic slowdown. Government consumption recorded a 0.9-percent drop during the period after posting a 4.1-percent growth in the first quarter of 2004.

But the government's chief economist said an improvement in the country's fiscal position would help push the economy forward.

"It's pain for the short run, but gain on the long run," Neri said.

Roberto de Vera, an economist from the University of Asia and the Pacific, said the deceleration in the country's economy should be viewed from the perspective of a slowdown in the global economy expected this year.

"There is a perception from many economists that there will be a decline in world economic growth because oil prices are expected to remain high, and because of that, people will consume less," De Vera said in an interview.

He said the Philippines should be able to achieve a 5.3-growth in GDP this year if the government sustained its fiscal reform programs. *With reports by AFP and Reuters*

Explain Boracay project, lawmakers ask AFP brass

From page A1

a government call for belt-tightening and claims of lack of essential needs for troops in the battlefield.

House Minority Leader Francis Escudero said AFP Chief of Staff Gen. Efren Abu should explain whether the private individuals who purportedly gave money for the project in return received favors.

Rep. Roilo Golez, chair of the House committee on national defense, said he would question Abu today at a hearing on the planned military modernization to find out about the resort project's specifics and if Defense Secretary Avelino Cruz knew about it.

Anakpawis Rep. Rafael Mariano asked: "What's next? A body spa salon?"

Scale model

An INQUIRER reporter visited the resort on May 13, a month after its "soft opening" following the completion of 10 rooms. When completed, the resort would consist of two three-story buildings with 30 air-conditioned rooms each, a bean-shaped swimming pool and a separate rest house for senior officers, according to a scale model of the complex.

Lt. Gen. Emmanuel Teodosio, AFP Central Command chief, said the hotel was planned to boost troop morale and meet the rest and recreational needs of ordinary soldiers and their families.

AFP spokespersons said the project was being financed by donations from businessmen, veterans and civilians. The donors included the Kaibigan ng mga Kawal sa Kapulunan (KKK), a group formed from businessmen. Little was known about the project in Camp Aguinaldo, according to sources there interviewed by the INQUIRER.

"What's wrong with having a donated world-class military resort in Boracay island?" AFP Deputy Chief of Staff Lt. Gen. Edilberto Adan asked an INQUIRER reporter in Zamboanga City.

He said the project was conceptualized and initiated by Teodosio and organized by the KKK. He said the final structure would depend on donations.

The resort is one of the two projects launched after Abu took over the Armed Forces last October that have sparked criticism of the military hierarchy. The other was the renovation of sidewalks in Camp Aguinaldo.

Disheartening

"It is very disheartening to see that it's not just the administration but also the AFP leadership that is insensitive to the suffering of our countrymen," Escudero said.

"If indeed they were able to raise money and did not use government funds, they should have used it for soldiers' benefits and not in this way of giving pleasure for their own selves," he said.

"The AFP's Boracay resort will surely further widen the cracks within the already fractious military—among the officers themselves and between these armchair generals and the rank-and-file in the battlefield," said Mariano, a member of the House committee on national defense.

He said soldiers had already complained about Abu's plan to place decorative tiles on Camp Aguinaldo's sidewalks, saying it was "unnecessary and extravagant."

"There is nothing new with dubious and graft-ridden projects in the AFP. This is the most outstanding grievance of the Oakwood mutineers," Mariano said, referring to the failed coup in Makati City two years ago.

Unconscionable luxury

Rep. Vincent Garcia (NPC, Davao City), vice chair of the House committee on national defense, said the resort was an "unconscionable luxury."

Garcia and Rep. Aurelio Umali (Lakas, Nueva Ecija) said it was not right to put up "such monument of luxury" while the government still owed Filipino veterans P36 billion in benefits and soldiers in Mindanao do not get their rice subsidy.

"It's saddening that while the government has been earnestly calling for austere use of public funds, the Armed Forces is undertaking a luxury project that will benefit only their officers. The Armed Forces should instead embark on projects to uplift the condition of our soldiers and promote our national security," Garcia said. *With a report from Julie S. Alipala, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

SOLDIERS training in Boracay: This time, a project for rest and recreation. VAL HANDUMON

RP 99% 'jueteng'-free? Rosales not amused

From page A1

Police. Wanna bet?

Not being a gambling man, Manila Archbishop Gaudencio Rosales was not amused by the pronouncement.

"I don't want to criticize, but they should know better than to make statements like that," Rosales told reporters on Sunday at the Manila Cathedral.

PNP Director General Arturo Lomibao, himself suspected of receiving monthly jueteng payola, announced last week that he and his men had almost stamped out the underground lottery game nationwide.

To back his claim, Lomibao had asked field commanders to submit "certifications" signed by local Church leaders. Such a certification was supposed to prove that jueteng had indeed been wiped out in an area.

Rosales warned people not to try asking for his signature.

"They will be shamed if they ask me," he said in Filipino, pointing out that the PNP announcement was probably true—but only "on paper."

"You know, [jueteng] is a mentality, it's part of a dirty culture," Rosales explained. "In other words, you don't just eradicate ... a bad habit."

Solving the problem, he said, would require the Church to educate and convince the public to abandon the multibillion-peso industry, a lucrative source of money for unscrupulous politicians and policemen.

"Above all, there must be a change in values [and] purification of culture," the prelate said. "The mentality has to be changed."

Luzon officially jueteng-free

The whole of Luzon is now officially "jueteng-free," Senior Supt. Leopoldo Bataoil, PNP spokesperson, said yesterday.

Polilio Island, the only territory which failed to submit a certification that it was jueteng-free by 5 p.m. Friday, had already done so.

This means that Luzon's 57 cities, 714 towns, 38 provinces and eight regions are now "100 percent" cleared of the poor man's vice, according to Bataoil.

Under pressure from the media and his boss, President Macapagal-Arroyo, Lomibao gave field commanders until Friday last week to submit certifications, signed by the mayor and parish priest or leader of the dominant religion, that their area had been cleared of the vice.

Luzon's towns and cities submitted their certifications on Friday, including Polilio, whose results were not immediately transmitted to the PNP.

Really, there's no jueteng

Over the weekend, Chief Supt. Florante Baguio, chief of the PNP Special Anti-Illegal Gambling Task Force, said the group continued to receive reports of sporadic jueteng operations in several areas in Luzon and Metro Manila.

He identified the areas as Fairview in Quezon City, San Pablo City in Laguna, and the boundary of Ifugao and Isabela.

"But we found no jueteng there," he said.

Yesterday, Baguio said the task force was verifying reports of continued jueteng operations in Nasugbu, Batangas.

Jueteng by text

But the Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas merely laughed off the PNP's pronouncements, insisting that jueteng operations continued in Luzon.

Gambling lords had devised ways to get around the crackdown on the illegal numbers game, this time with the use of text messaging, claimed the KMP. Its provincial chapters, it said, had been closely monitoring developments of the government's antijueteng campaign.

"In the Ilocos region and the Cordillera Autonomous Region, jueteng operations still continue, but this time the betting is through text," KMP information officer Carl Ala said in an e-mail.

The jeepneys and buses took care of the collection system, he said.

Try 'loteng'

In Central Luzon, people turned to *loteng*, he said.

In this game, the winning combination is based on the winning lotto numbers aired on TV.

"It is said to be sweeping Central Luzon today," Ala said.

The KMP brandished the PNP's efforts as "Band Aid solutions."

If no jueteng lord or protector has been caught, how can the PNP declare that a province or a region is jueteng-free, the group said.

Just say no

For jueteng to stop, local officials must say no to the protection money offered by jueteng operators.

This was the clarion call of a nongovernment organization working to eradicate the illegal numbers game which led to the downfall of President Joseph Estrada, and which now threatens the Arroyo administration.

Gary David, executive director of Krusada ng Bayan Laban sa Jueteng, an NGO chaired by Archbishop Oscar Cruz, explained that jueteng operations around the country "stand on three legs: There are the operators, the police or military and the local officials."

"If one of the legs is broken, then the whole operation crumbles. It's important to make jueteng operations difficult in one area because this will force the operator to move elsewhere. Getting local officials to say no to protection money is the surest way of achieving this," David said.

Domino effect

He explained that if local officials pledged to refuse protection money offered by jueteng operators, heads of local police as well as military commanders in the area would be forced to do the same, or risk getting transferred.

"If a local official says no and the chief of police will still accept the protection money, this will cause some tension between the two," David said.

But in the end, he said, it was the local officials who had the upper hand because they controlled the assignments of their local police chiefs.

David also said that if a local official refused the protection money, jueteng would not automatically stop "but *cabos* and *cobradors* (collectors) will not be able to move freely in that area."

P34-B industry

He also revealed that protection money, called *intelihensya*, could range from P50,000 a month for small-town mayors to P4 million a month for governors of larger provinces. He estimated that *intelihensya* could reach P13 billion a year.

Jueteng, according to David, is a P34-billion-a-year industry.

He dismissed claims made by the PNP that Metro Manila and the whole of Luzon were already jueteng-free.

Based on reports from Krusada chapters, "it (jueteng) never stopped," David said.

INQBOX
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Senders of d best 20 texts as publishd in Tuesday's INQBOX wiL each receiv an *Inquirer Mug!
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6 Nigerians nabbed in dollar scams

By Margaux C. Ortiz

SIX NIGERIANS allegedly involved in counterfeiting operations were arrested separately in Manila and Pasay City over the weekend.

National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) agents arrested two of the Nigerians after a real estate broker was nearly duped into accepting $1 million in counterfeit United States currency.

The suspects were identified as Freeman Kingsley and Mark Haswell, residing in Pasay and Manila, respectively. The foreigners were apprehended in an entrapment operation over the weekend in Pasay City.

According to a report of the NBI's Anti-Graft Division, Kingsley offered to invest $1 million in the real estate business of complainant Vicente Dalanon.

On one occasion, Kingsley allegedly showed Dalanon a bag containing bundles of black paper, which the Nigerian claimed was his payment.

The paper was coated with an unknown substance, which allegedly reacts to a special solution supplied by Kingsley, according to NBI Anti-Graft Division head Manuel Eduarte.

Kingsley claimed that when the black paper was soaked in "SSD Automatic Solution," the black coating would dissolve and the paper would look like a real $100 bill.

Kingsley demonstrated this to Dalanon and successfully exchanged the bill for Philippine currency in a money changer shop, Eduarte said.

The Nigerian then told Dalanon that a special incubator, owned by a Libyan diplomat, can melt the chemical to produce money.

He reportedly asked the broker for P75,000 to pay the diplomat for the use of the machine. Kingsley then left the paper bundles in Dalanon's possession.

Dalanon sought the bureau's help upon realizing that something was wrong. NBI agents accompanied Dalanon to a fast food restaurant where the Nigerians arranged a meeting.

NBI operatives recovered the bag containing bundles of black paper marked with a "Bank of America" seal.

Haswell denied the allegations, saying that Kingsley just asked him to escort his fellow Nigerian to the restaurant.

"I don't do this type of business," Haswell said in a press conference.

When asked to present their travel documents, Haswell was able to produce his passport and other papers. Kingsley however failed to present his passport, claiming that he had lost it.

In a separate operation, the Western Police District arrested four Nigerians on Saturday on the complaint of Josefina Espino, 43, a businesswoman from Sta. Cruz, Manila.

The four Nigerians, Friday Nwoke, Ikenna Agbaegbu, Ugum Igbunam and Henry Obina Nwani, are now facing attempted estafa charges and possession of counterfeit US dollar bills.

Initial investigation showed that Igbunam had asked Espino for an order of one container van of welding rods worth P8.9 million.

After making delivery arrangements, the suspects asked Espino to talk to their agent on the phone for the payment.

Police said a man who identified himself as the finance minister of Nigeria talked to Espino and asked for her bank account number so that he could deposit the payment.

However, the woman received a call from another man, claiming to be a diplomat from Nigeria.

The man told Espino that he had a package from the Nigerian finance minister.

But the caller insisted that she pay $1,800 for airway bills.

Sensing something was amiss, the victim sought police assistance that led to the arrest of the four foreigners in an entrapment operation.

Policemen recovered a box, containing bundles of cut black papers and chemicals, an instruction manual and a $100 bill believed to be fake. *With Miko Morelos, trainee*

Elevated U-turn slot on C5 Road

By Leila B. Salaverria

THE METROPOLITAN Manila Development Authority's proposal for an elevated U-turn slot would be adopted for the traffic-prone C5-Kalayaan Avenue intersection in Makati City, according to the agency chair Bayani Fernando.

Fernando said he and officials of the Department of Public Works and Highways had agreed to implement the MMDA's design instead of an underground interchange that public works engineers were proposing.

Not urgent

But the MMDA chair was also quick to say that there was no immediate need for the flyover.

"The elevated U-turn slot is not urgent. We could revert to the old U-turn scheme and that can work for two to three years," he said yesterday in an interview after a Manila Hotel forum.

The U-turn scheme at the C5-Kalayaan interchange previously implemented by the MMDA had been suspended by the Makati City government.

Makati closure

Makati closed the MMDA U-turn slots and returned the use of traffic lights.

Under the MMDA scheme, a portion of the intersection is closed and vehicles would have to make a U-turn on another road to cross to the other side.

The MMDA is planning to meet with city officials to work out the return of the scheme.

ONLOOKERS gather around the body of one of two suspects killed in yesterday's robbery in Manila.

REM ZAMORA

2 robbers killed, 2 others get away with loot

A TEAM from the Police Anti-Crime Emergency Response (Pacer) engaged alleged robbers in a shootout yesterday afternoon in Manila, killing two suspects.

The suspects had just allegedly robbed employees of a shipping company near the Delpan Bridge.

The suspects, who remained unidentified as of press time, were killed on the spot.

Police identified the robbery victims as Fe Villegas, Gothong Shipping Lines' Administrative Officer for Finance, and Lorenzo Pagador, the company driver.

Pagador told reporters that they were about to deposit money at the Equitable-PCI Bank Pier-South branch when the suspects announced the heist at about 1:30 p.m.

The driver said he had no idea how much cash they were carrying.

Insp. Auxilio Dador of Pacer-NCR said they received a tip that robbers were about to rob the Gothong Shipping Lines office near Delpan Bridge.

Dador said Pacer immediately dispatched a team to confirm the information.

While the team was tailing a multicab vehicle (JMJ-613), a maroon Tamaraw FX (WCC-955) suddenly cut the multicab's path.

Dador said four men got out of the FX and held Villegas at gunpoint, seizing from her two small bags containing the cash.

A brief gunfight ensued between the Pacer operatives and the robbers, killing two.

But Dador said two other suspects were able to escape with the undetermined amount of cash.

Dador said nobody from the police team was hurt.

Police recovered an M-16 rifle from the slain suspects and were investigating whether it was registered for loose firearm.

According to Dador, the suspects were members of the Apuyog gang, who are known to operate in Central and Southern Luzo. *Margaux C. Ortiz and Miko Morelos, trainee*

Lawyer on the defensive

By Tarra V. Quismundo

FROM defender to defendant.

One lawyer's career has taken such a turn after a state prosecutor hauled him off to court for allegedly falsifying public documents in his defense of a client in a 9-year-old murder case.

Lawyer Silverio Ibay, 65, is on trial at the Makati Metropolitan Trial Court for allegedly presenting to court a fake document in his attempt to absolve former policeman Dominador Gonzales of murder charges.

Former FVR aide

Gonzales had been charged with the May 1996 killing of Eleuterio Rodriguez, a former security guard of former President Fidel V. Ramos, in Gen. Trias, Cavite.

The case is being handled by State Prosecutor Emmanuel Velasco before the sala of Makati Regional Trial Court Judge Zenaida Laguilles.

Fake manifesto

Velasco filed the criminal case against Ibay as he alleged the lawyer conspired with his client to forge a manifesto of support for the former President.

The manifesto also showed that Gonzales had signed the document along with Rodriguez in an attempt to belie that they had a rift.

The document was presented during trial in February. *With Sharline Bareng, trainee*

Gov't hospitals treat patients like doormats

ON TARGET

Ramon Tulfo

HUNDREDS of thousands of readers of the INQUIRER were probably raving mad and retching as they read a front-page story yesterday. The report told of the dehumanizing treatment that patients at the Fabella Memorial Hospital suffer at the hands of doctors, nurses and health workers.

Fabella hospital is behind the Central Market in Sta. Cruz, Manila. It delivers scores of babies of poor and pregnant moms every day.

Here's one sickening dialogue between a doctor and a patient at Fabella, as reported in that article:

"'*Ikaw na naman? Taun-taon ka na lang nanganak! Pagkatapos nito, magpa*-ligate *ka na*! (It's you again? Every year you give birth! After this, you should have a ligation!)' one health worker recalled hearing a male doctor scold a mother in the delivery room.

"Getting no reply from the helpless woman, the doctor allegedly was heard mumbling to his assistants: '*Sana patay ang bata, sana patay ang bata* (I hope the baby is dead).'"

Getting angrier when he saw that the baby was alive, the same doctor, said to be a graduate of a top medical school in Manila, allegedly took out completely the woman's uterus. He didn't ask permission from the patient.

"Really? Wow!" was the reaction of newly appointed Health Secretary Francisco Duque III. He said he would have the incident investigated.

C'mon, Mr. Secretary! As a doctor, you've known all along what's happening in our government hospitals. Don't tell me you didn't have your internship in one of these government hospitals.

With very few exceptions, like the Ospital ng Makati, government hospitals treat their patients like doormats. Patients are made to sleep on the hospital floor, they're not given proper medical care and medicines, and they're humiliated in front of other patients and even their relatives.

Their only "sin" is that they are poor. They can't afford the fees of topnotch doctors who are employed by first-class private hospitals or in the United States. The hospital bills are too high for them; so, they suffer in silence while they are shouted at, cussed and even manhandled by the very people who are supposed to help them recover from their illness.

Last year, this corner reported the manhandling of patients by some doctors at the government-run Rizal Medical Center in Pasig.

Elsie Villarmil, a student at the Philippine Women's University school of nursing, got into trouble with her school after she exposed to this writer the humiliation patients underwent at the hands of some doctors at the RMC.

Villarmil told me she was having on-the-job training at the hospital when she saw some doctors slapping or pulling the hair of some patients who were in the throes of childbirth.

I went to Sen. Juan Flavier, a former government doctor, and told him the problem at RMC. He called up a health undersecretary and sent the student-nurse to him. The official reportedly berated her for making a "big fuss over a small matter."

What, Mr. Usec, you think that was a small matter? Haven't you heard about the late President Ramon Magsaysay's admonition that those who have less in life should have more in law and government services?

You're just like your fellow doctors who look down on poor patients.

Shame on you!

Board marks books with seal of quality

By Edson C. Tandoc Jr.

WANT a good book? Look for the "Quality Seal."

Hoping to encourage publishers to produce quality reading materials, the National Book Development Board is putting its stamp on excellent books.

Have you found a book full of errors? The board is also ready to accept complaints.

It will subject the questionable book to a review and, if the book is found to be erroneous, the publisher will face sanctions, board chair Dennis Gonzalez said.

These are two of the programs the board launched yesterday morning in a press conference in Marikina City as the board began its celebration of the Philippine Book Development Month this June.

The goal: Make the country the publishing hub in Asia.

But this requires a lot of work for the board, which admits that while many low-quality books are still being published in the country.

Gonzalez said it was more cost-effective to print books in other countries where paper is cheaper.

But aside from physical quality, books in the country also suffer from inadequate research, he said.

"Some publishers find it too costly to invest in research and development. Sometimes they hire authors who are not experts in the field," Gonzalez said.

But the board is striving to do something to address the problem.

The board is pushing for a "print city" in one of the economic zones in the country to make the industry competitive.

It is also preparing grants to authors who want to publish their books but cannot afford it.

And there is the "Quality Seal."

"(The seal) is envisioned to become an authoritative and sought-after assurance of excellence in the local book publishing industry," board acting executive director Maricar Aquino said.

For error-filled textbooks, the board is coming up with a new rule.

The board will cancel the registration of its members whose books would be found to be of poor quality.

"If you find that a textbook has too many errors, you can report the book and we shall review it," Gonzalez said.

Should the board find the complaints valid, the registration of the publisher of the erroneous book will be canceled.

Without registration, the publisher cannot offer its books for consideration of the Department of Education.

However, the rule can only be applied to the more than 80 registered members of the board.

The new rule will also cover books printed or revised starting January this year, Gonzalez said.

Good textbooks may qualify for the annual awards for the best textbooks used in schools.

METROBRIEFS

P4M shabu seized

ALLEGED members of a syndicate involved in peddling P4 million worth of methamphetamine hydrochloride or "shabu" were arrested in Quezon City last Friday. Western Police District director Chief Supt. Pedro Bulaong identified the suspects as Nassif Abbas, 22, a native of Marawi City and residing at Maningning Street, Quezon City; Jamal Bubong, 28, a native of Maging, Lanao del Sur, and residing in Barangay Aguho, Pateros, and their 17-year-old accomplice. The suspects yielded 35 plastic sachets of shabu weighing two kilos, Bulaong said. The police said a kilo of shabu was worth P2 million.

Sidewalk sleeping

NO PLACE to stay the night in Quezon City? Quezon City lawmakers have a word for you: Don't sleep on the sidewalk. Nine city councilors have proposed banning sleeping on sidewalks in Quezon City, because it was an "eyesore" and unsanitary. Councilor Resty Malangen and eight other councilors noted that those who sleep on sidewalks, including street children or drunks, often use the sidewalks as their toilet. The councilors proposed that first offenders be admonished not to sleep on sidewalks. Repeat offenders would be penalized. *Laurent Thorigne, trainee*

Metrobank COPS

THE SELECTION board of Metrobank Foundation Inc. has trimmed down to 20 semi-finalists the 92 nominees it earlier received nationwide for the Search for the Country's Outstanding Policemen in Service (COPS). The nine-member board was divided into two committees—one rating the documents of police commissioned officers, with the other rating those of noncommissioned officers. The search is sponsored by the Metrobank Foundation Inc. in cooperation with the Rotary Club of New Manila East and the PNP. The final judging will be by the last week of this month.

METRO
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Editor Ester G. Dipasupil

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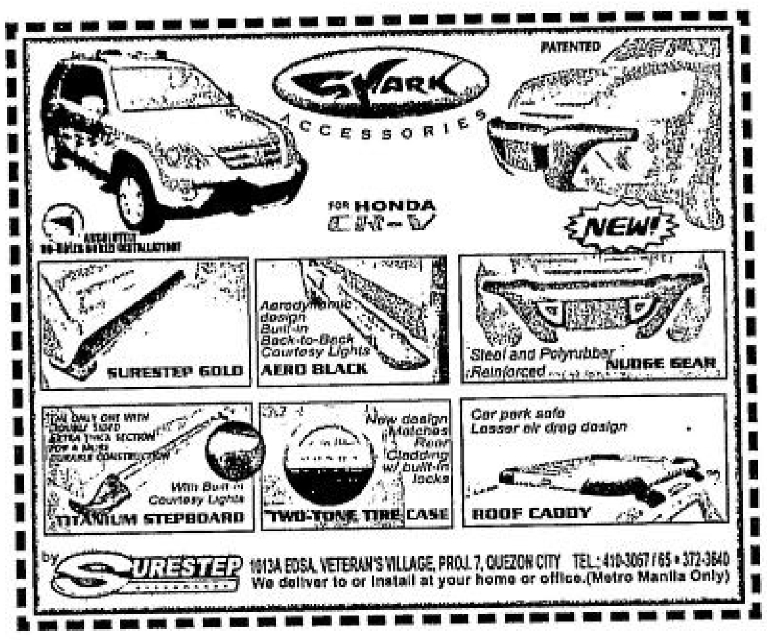
SINCE 1993

Arroceros Park an archeological site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By Tina G. Santos

ENVIRONMENTALISTS fighting to preserve nature at the Arroceros Forest Park in Manila have found new reason to stop the construction of a building in the site—the area is an archeological heritage site as declared by the National Museum in 1993.

Members of the Winner Foundation, the group taking care of the 2.1-hectare property, believe that this little-known fact could be used to compel Manila officials to stop constructing a building inside the nature sanctuary.

In April 2003, National Museum director Corazon Alvina wrote Winner president Regina Paterno, saying there were "strong archaeological indications and evidence that the park is rich in archaeological heritage."

Alvina said this was based on archaeological excavations in nearby sites like the Mehan Garden, Metropolitan Theater Building and the Government Service Insurance System compounds.

Diggings yielded significant cultural artifacts that reflect human occupation and burials dating back to the 16th to the 18th centuries AD, Alvina said.

"Based on Section 2, Letter J of PD 374, an amendment to RA 4846, otherwise known as 'The Cultural Properties Preservation and Protection Act,' the Arroceros Forest Park is herewith designated an archaeological site," Alvina said in the letter.

According to Chit Roces, a Winner member, ceramic shards have been found in the area since 1993. And just last Sunday, Roces said they found 16th- and 17th-century shards in areas that have been dug up by workers.

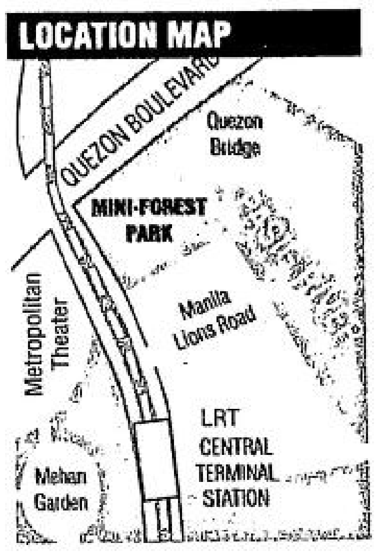
"We found pottery, porcelain and ceramics we believe belonged to different Chinese dynasties," she said.

"As an archaeological site, as soon as you hit something, diggings must be stopped and turn over the area to the National Museum," she added.

Prior to the park's declaration as an archaeological site, Wilfredo Ronquillo, chief of the National Museum's Archaeology Division, said numerous and rich archaeological materials were found in the forest park.

"... (These materials) are useful to generate archaeological data for the proper learning, wisdom and appreciation of the country's archaeological heritage...," Ronquillo said.

LOCATION MAP



Sought for comment, Dr. Ma. Luisa Quinones, Manila Division of City Schools superintendent, said they had been told that the entire property was not an archaeological site.

"We will still proceed with the project. We will just secure a clearance from the National Museum," Quinones said.

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Man in cop's uniform kills two over curses

By Edson C. Tandoc Jr.

BULLETS for curses.

Donil Dave Gaberia, 17, was on a tricycle with his friends the other night when an overtaking black Honda CR-V nearly hit them in Pasig City, police said.

He threw some curses. The car stopped.

A man in a police uniform and a camouflage jacket got out of the car and walked toward Gaberia.

Without a word, the stranger pulled out a gun and shot the boy in the forehead, PO2 Fernan Atanacio said in his report.

The killer and a companion later shot to death Gaberia's companion, Jo Alvin dela Cruz, 17.

The suspects even opened fire at three other teenagers on the tricycle, but these managed to run for their lives.

Dela Cruz was driving the tricycle on Manalo Street in Barangay Sto. Tomas at 11:45 p.m. Sunday when the car nearly hit them.

Furious, Gaberia, who was seated behind Dela Cruz, allegedly shouted invectives.

"Pu-ng -ang sasakyan ito. Nanggigitgit pa!" witnesses quoted Gaberia.

The car stopped in front of the tricycle. The man in police uniform got off and walked toward the group of teenagers.

He shot Gaberia before casually walking back to the car.

But then he and a companion got out of the CR-V and went back to the tricycle. This time both men reportedly shot Dela Cruz.

Their friends ran as the killers also opened fire at them, Atanacio said.

Investigators at the crime scene recovered 11 empty shells, some of which were from a .45-cal. pistol.

Caloocan employees receive ₱25-M bonus

By Nancy C. Carvajal

ECHIVERRI

AS A RESULT of higher revenue collection, Caloocan City employees have received their mid-year bonus earlier this year in time for the opening of classes.

"Close to P25 million was released to augment the employees' money for tuition and school supplies," said Mayor Enrico Echiverri.

About 2,600 City Hall employees benefited from the early disbursement, which resulted from high revenue collection, the mayor said.

The city, according to Echiverri, collected P937.2 million in revenue during the first quarter of the year.

The amount was P252.5 million higher than the P684.7 million collected last year.

Echiverri added that the early release of the funds was also his way of showing his gratitude to the employees who worked hard to help the city achieve its goal of higher tax and revenue take.

In the past, the mayor said, bonuses were released between the months of June and July or even in August or September.

The mayor added that the early release of the bonus would prevent employees from seeking credit from loan sharks.

"Most of the time employees get buried in debt before they receive their money," the mayor said.

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SPORTS TV

Compiled by L. Manguiat

GOLF: LPGA Coming Classic; 5:30 p.m.; ESPN—Check the first round in this LPGA event.

BASKETBALL: NBA Playoffs—Suns vs Spurs, Game 4, Western Finals; 8:30 a.m. (r-9 p.m.); Solar Sports—San Antonio tries to take advantage of their home floor against Phoenix.

TENNIS: 2005 French Open; 6 p.m.; Sports Plus—Quarterfinal action takes place on the clay courts of Roland Garros.

Schedules subject to change without prior notice.

POC seeking Fiba nod for country's national fives

By Musong R. Castillo

THE PHILIPPINE Olympic Committee has not asked the international basketball federation (Fiba) to withdraw recognition of the suspended Basketball Association of the Philippines.

But the local Olympic body wants Fiba-International to recognize and accept Philippine teams the POC will send to Fiba-sanctioned tournaments while the BAP is under suspension.

These points were stressed by POC president Jose "Peping" Cojuangco in a letter to Fiba president Carl Ching Menky. The Olympic body also informed Ching of the BAP suspension and asked for the support of the world cage body.

"We did everything by the book," Cojuangco told Ching in his letter. "The BAP enjoyed due process and the POC expects no less from the International Federation.

In a press statement, Cojuangco said the POC did not ask the Fiba to withdraw its recognition of the BAP, but to recognize the teams that will be fielded by the (POC) working committee while [the] BAP is serving suspension.

In a unanimous decision, the BAP was indefinitely suspended by the POC General Assembly last week following a recommendation by Cojuangco.

The POC head said the BAP failed to comply with fundamental agreements forged in a pact with the major stakeholders of basketball last month.

A caretaker committee, with Cojuangco as chair, has since taken over BAP functions.

A decision by the POC-organized basketball committee to form a new and stronger national team to the Seaba (Southeast Asian Basketball Association) tournament later this month in Singapore was a key issue which the BAP had repudiated.

The Seaba is a qualifier to the Fiba-Asia men's championship in Doha, Qatar, this September where the top two teams gain entry to the world championship next year in Japan.

The country wants to host the next Fiba-Asia tourney in 2007 which will reward the top two teams, aside from China, of automatic entry in the 2008 Beijing Olympics.

Meanwhile, the BAP has been given 24 hours by the Philippine Sports Commission to justify its continued stay at the Rizal Memorial Complex.

The PSC is enforcing action after being formally informed by the POC of the BAP's suspension Friday last week.

"We are giving you 24 hours to answer in order for the Commission to exercise independent judgment," Guillermo Iroy, the PSC executive director, wrote the BAP yesterday.

Adducul lifts RP dribblers past Kazakhs

By Francis Ochoa

THE GUY with the deepest reserve of international experience used every drop of it last night.

Romel Adducul keyed a late fourth-quarter charge by RP-San Miguel Beer in an 88-67 unmasking of Kazakhstan in the FedEx Fiba-Asia Champions' Cup at the Araneta Coliseum.

AUGUST DELA CRUZ

KAZAKHS Vdovin Sergey (15) and Kazantsov Sergei pressure RP's Romel Adducul during their game last night.

Adducul sneaked in every bump and elbow to establish a crucial presence in the shaded area as the hosts put together relentless pressure in the fourth quarter to finally rip the game wide open.

"We wanted to test our stamina at the beginning," said national coach Chot Reyes. "We were coming off a game last night [Sunday] and Kazakhstan was playing for the first time, so we wanted to preserve our strength until late in the game."

The ploy worked. The Filipinos put it all together in the fourth, forcing turnovers with relentless ball pressure and watching Adducul hem down defenders down low.

By the time Kazakhstan caught its breath, the Philippines had turned a 60-55 third quarter lead into an 88-65 cushion.

"Romel played a big role for us," said Reyes. "He really knows how to play the international game."

"I guess it was experience," said Adducul, who has had the most number of stints with national teams among his teammates.

Adducul finished with 16 points and eight rebounds, six coming off the offensive glass as he picked up misses on a night when the team recovered from a shooting slump against opening day foe India.

Renren Ritualo, who missed all 12 attempts from the field against India, including nine from beyond the arc, made four of eight attempts from the three-point region.

Nic Belasco led RP-San Miguel with 17 points and eight boards.

Meanwhile, Iran-Saba Battery wasted no time sending a message to the rest of the field by quashing a visibly overmatched Indian side, 94-50, in an earlier match.

The Filipinos crushed the Indians on opening day, 81-49.

Qatar debuted in slam-bang fashion by drubbing the United Arab Emirates in the first game, 101-44.

In the other scheduled match, Fastlink-Jordan edged Kuwait, 99-95.

The scores:

First Game

QATAR 101—Abdulla 28, Day 18, Ali 11, Salem 8, Saeed 6, Abdi 7, Musa 7, Pasco 4, Al Hajri 3, Salman 3, Al Abdulla 2, Al Fahd 2.

UAE 44—Mater 11, Robinson 10, Mahmoud 8, Hyman 6, Farhan 3, Sanqour 2, Ahmed 2, Mohd 2, Gholum 0.

Quarters: 28-9, 52-18, 79-31, 101-44

Second Game

IRAN—Pitts 22, Eslamieh 19, Sohrabnejad 13, Bahrami, M. 11, Darrehsari 6, Hall 6, Afradi 6, Honardoust 4, Bahrami, A. 3, Veisi 2, Jamshidvand 1, Kamrani 1.

INDIA 50—Riyazuddin 24, Rai 11, Robinson 6, Shiukumar 4, Singh Y. 2, Thomas 2, Singh J. 1, Ahmed 0.

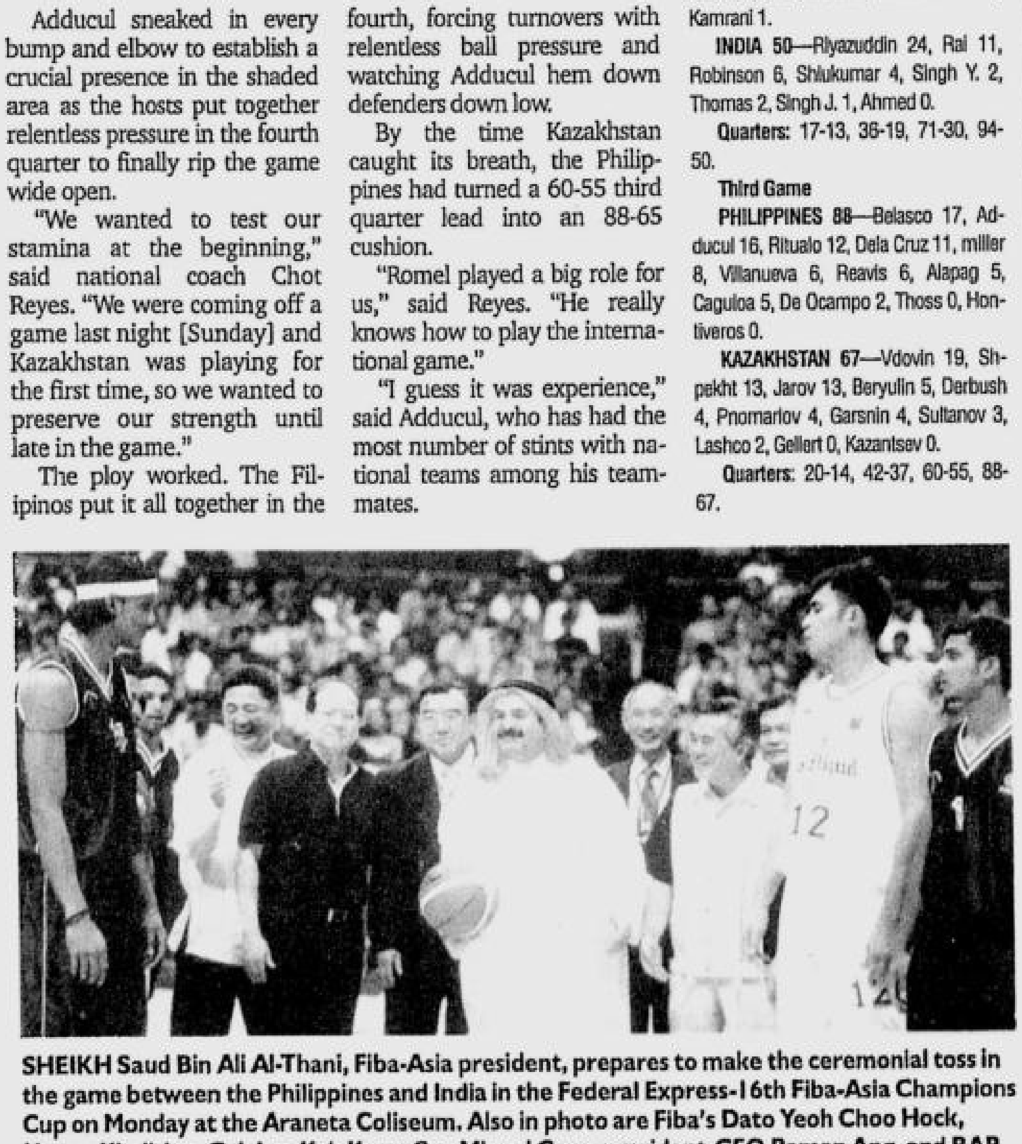
Quarters: 17-13, 36-19, 71-30, 94-50.

Third Game

PHILIPPINES 88—Belasco 17, Adducul 16, Ritualo 12, Dela Cruz 11, miller 8, Villanueva 6, Reavis 6, Alapag 5, Caguioa 5, De Ocampo 2, Thoss 0, Hontiveros 0.

KAZAKHSTAN 67—Vdovin 19, Shpekht 13, Jarov 13, Beryulin 5, Derbush 4, Pnomarlov 4, Garsnin 4, Sultanov 3, Lashco 2, Gellert 0, Kazantsev 0.

Quarters: 20-14, 42-37, 60-55, 88-67.



SHEIKH Saud Bin Ali Al-Thani, Fiba-Asia president, prepares to make the ceremonial toss in the game between the Philippines and India in the Federal Express-16th Fiba-Asia Champions Cup on Monday at the Araneta Coliseum. Also in photo are Fiba's Dato Yeoh Choo Hock, Hagop Khajirian, Col. Lee Kak Kuan, San Miguel Corp. president-CEO Ramon Ang, and BAP executive VP Christian Tan and Manila Hotel president Joey Lina.

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STAGE 5 RESULTS

STAGE INDIVIDUAL

1. E. Feliciano, VAT Riders, 4 hours 23 minutes 13 seconds
2. E. Obosa, Go 21, 1 minute 42 seconds behind
3. O. Villanueva, VAT Riders, same
4. R. Sambrano, Guerrero Brandy, same
5. R. Navarro, Custom, 1:51 minutes
6. E. Pablo, VAT Riders, same
7. D. Perez, Colt 45, same
8. D. Hererra, Tourism, 2:35 mins
9. E. Domingo, Guerrero Brandy, 3:09 mins
10. F. Alagano, Metro Drug, 3:20 mins
11. D. Marana, Colt 45, same
12. C. Jasul, Colt 45, same
13. G. Gines, Custom, same
14. R. Hualda, Tourism, same
15. V. Quintia JR., Metro Drug, same
16. V. Mueno, Guerrero Brandy, same
17. L. Atilano, Metro Drug, same
18. A. Quirimit, Tourism, same
19. O. Rendole, Tourism, same
20. J. Asiado, Metro Drug, same
21. N. Estayo, Touch Mobile, same
22. G. Bergonio, Touch Mobile, 4:50 mins
23. A. Asuncion, Tourism, same
24. L. Mandi, PLDT, 4:59 mins
25. F. Maghitang, PLDT, same
26. B. Ravina, Go 21, same
27. W. Calosa, Guerrero Brandy, same
28. S. Diamsay, Tourism, same
29. M. Mendoza, Touch Mobile, same
30. B. Lopez JR., Metro Drug, same
31. A. Ricafort, Touch Mobile, same
32. E. Atilano, Metro Drug, same
33. R. Martin, VAT Riders, same
34. J. Garcia, Touch Mobile, same
35. E. Paragoso, Tourism, same

OVERALL INDIVIDUAL

1. W. Davadilla, Colt 45, 14 hours 54 minutes 32 seconds
2. R. Tanguilig, PLDT, 2 minutes 25 seconds behind
3. R. Navarro, Custom, 2:50 mins
4. F. Alagano, Metro Drug, 3:17 mins
5. A. Benosa, Touch Mobile, 3:30 mins
6. E. Feliciano, VAT Riders, 3:34 mins
7. A. Quirimit, Tourism, 4:06 mins
8. S. Barnachea, Touch Mobile, 5:11 mins
9. B. Lopez Jr., Metro Drug, 5:33 mins
10. L. Atilano, Metro Drug, 5:37 mins
11. E. Obosa, Go 21, 5:53 mins
12. S. Diamsay, Tourism, 6:21 mins
13. M. McQuin Aleonar, VAT Riders, 6:39 mins
14. R. Sambrano, Guerrero Brandy, 6:44 mins
15. V. Mueno, Guerrero Brandy, 7:06 mins
16. D. Perez, Colt 45, 7:13 mins
17. F. Quinones, Custom, 7:50 mins
18. O. Rendole, Tourism, 8:23 mins
19. D. Ganigan, Guerrero Brandy, 8:24 mins
20. B. Ravina, Go 21, 8:33 mins
21. M. Primero, Custom, 8:49 mins
22. O. Villanueva, VAT Riders, 9:01 mins
23. R. Hualda, Tourism, 9:28 mins
24. D. Hererra, Tourism, 9:42 mins
25. J. Dasalla, Colt 45, 10:06 mins

OVERALL TEAM STANDINGS

1. Metro Drug, 55 hours 25 minutes 33.780 seconds
2. Colt 45, 4 minutes 51.937 seconds behind
3. Guerrero Brandy, 5:30.559 mins
4. VAT Riders, 5:59.772 mins
5. Tourism, 6:17.891 mins
6. Custom, 13:42.222 mins
7. Touch Mobile, 14:34.940 mins
8. Go 21, 18:44.360 mins
9. PLDT, 20:05.815 mins

Solo Stage 5 finish for Feliciano

By Marc Anthony Reyes

ALAMINOS, Pangasinan—Frederick Feliciano used his familiarity with the route to stage a solo breakaway in the final 20 kilometers of Stage 5 yesterday and emerge among the contenders in the Golden Tour 50@'05.

The national cross-country team mainstay from Vat Riders finished one minute, 42 seconds over the three-man second group led by Ericson Obosa of Go 21 and eventually climbed from 19th place to sixth overall halfway through this bikathon presented by Tanduay.

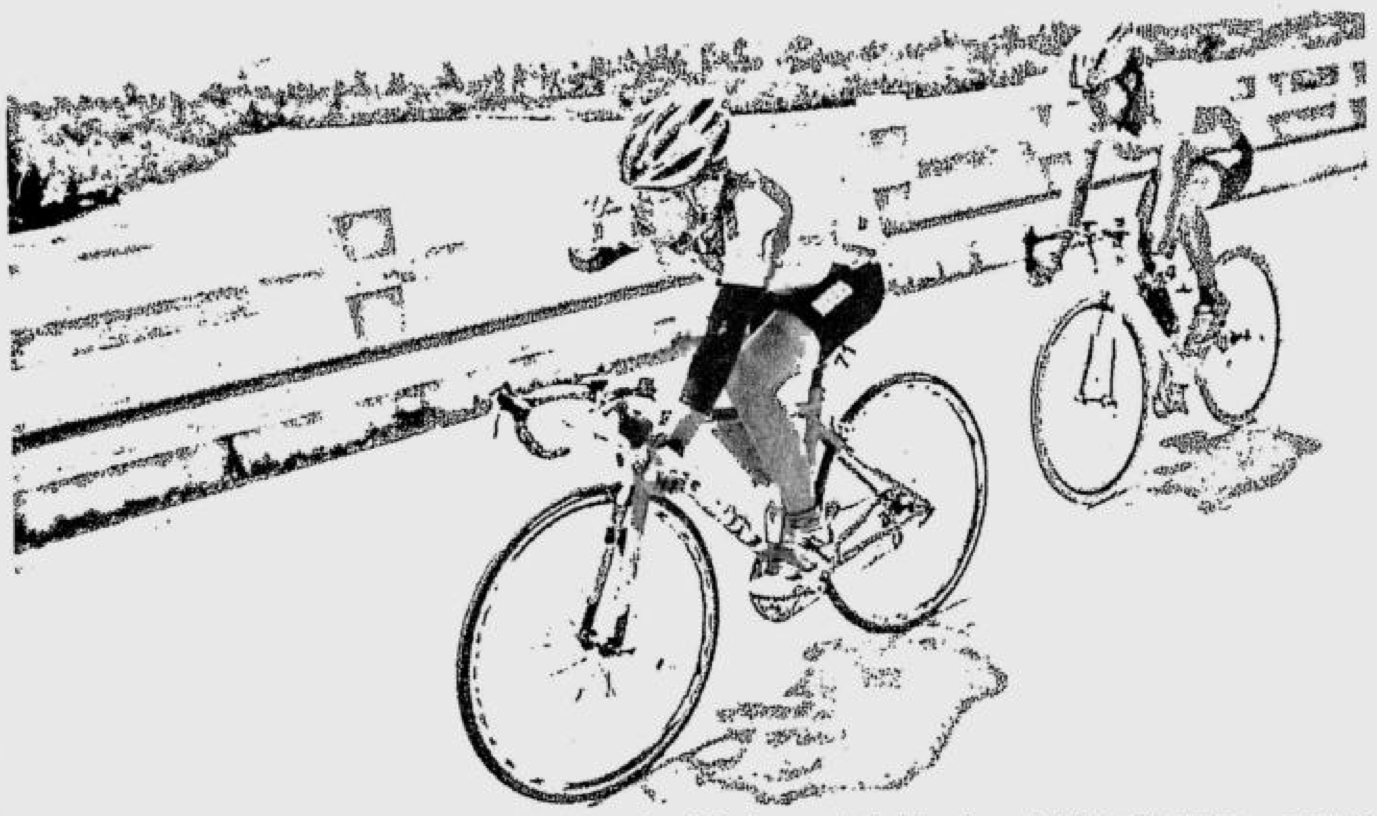
"I just don't want to go down so low in the overall standings," said the 27-year-old Feliciano, who covered the 205.5-km drive from Olongapo City in four hours, 23 minutes and 13 seconds and moved 3:34 off four-day yellow jersey owner Warren Davadilla.

The most decisive solo finish by a rider so far came as no surprise.

A cross country bronze medalist in the 2003 Southeast Asian Games in Vietnam, Feliciano also won two laps in last year's Tour Pilipinas and even wore the yellow jersey for three days before losing it for good in Dagupan.

Although complaining of tendenitis on his left knee, Feliciano, from Aliaga, Nueva Ecija, joined the race after ruling the Tour of Hundred Islands that ended here last month.

Davadilla, the Colt 45 captain, who arrived 62nd for the day and 6:23 behind Feliciano, will be enjoying today's rest day with his lead of 2:25 over PLDT skipper Rhyan Tanguilig intact.



VAT Riders skipper Frederick Feliciano (left) and Alfred Asuncion of Tourism sustain their breakaway in Infanta, Zambales. BOY CABRIDO

But there were major movements in the top 10 with Reynaldo Navarro of Custom climbing to third place just 2:50 off the pace from ninth. Fernando Alagano of Metro Drug advanced to fourth place 3:17 behind Davadilla and erstwhile third-placer Alvin Benosa of Touch Mobile slid to fifth, now 3:30 behind.

Tourism captain Arnel Quirimit, the 2003 champion, rose a notch higher from eight just 3:34 behind followed by TM's Santy Barnachea (5:11), JR Lopez (5:33) and Stage 4 winner Lito Atilano of Metro Drug, who barged into the top 10 from 13th place Sunday.

Despite keeping his lead, Davadilla complained of heavy guarding from Tanguilig and Benosa. He also lost precious time trying to retrieve his top-of-the-line Oakley shades which slipped off his cap in the frantic chase in the final three kilometers.

Luckily for him, the blue titanium wraparound shades he said cost P16,000 was picked up by a pursuing teammate.

As expected master sprinter Enrique Domingo, who figured in a spill the other day, was never a factor. He was with the second group most of way and later blamed his teammates for refusing to help him mount a rally.

The 37-year-old Domingo, who arrived ninth for the day and more than three minutes behind Feliciano, is out of the magic 30 overall.

The race was also marked by minor tragedies with a 15-year-old bystander getting hit by a private vehicle trying to escort the riders in Zambales, and one of the media cars bumping a stray cow as the Tour reached Pangasinan.

Big bikathon street party set Saturday

ALAMINOS—Golden Tour 50@'05 presenter Tanduay will host a big street party this Saturday in Baguio's Burnham Park with the Viva Hot Babes headlining a free concert.

Anna Leah Javier, Tanduay's calendar model for 2005, Jennifer Lee and Miles Hernandez are the Hot Babes scheduled to perform in the concert, where free drinks will be provided for the audience.

Tanduay hosted street parties in every stop of the Tour last year and it brought the project up a notch this time.

Meanwhile, sister teams Colt 45 and Guerrero Brandy failed to make up ground on team race leader Metro Drug after the 205.50-km fifth lap of the summer spectacle from Olongapo to here.

Colt 45 stayed in second spot while the Road Warriors are in third place.

Jewels, Wizards teams to beat in semis today

GAMES TODAY
(JCSGO Gym, Cubao)
2 p.m.—Montaña vs Granny Goose
4 p.m.—Welcoat vs Magnolia

WITH its talent and championship experience, Montaña Pawnshop is heavily favored in the PBL Unity Cup semifinals.

But the Jewels were given fair warning when they battle the unpredictable Granny Goose Kornets in Game 1 of their best-of-five series at 2 p.m. today at the JCSGO Gym in Cubao.

"The team is showing intensity," said coach Jun Tan of the Kornets, who dealt the Jewels' first loss in this conference. "It will be hard to beat Montaña, but our energy is there."

Just like Granny Goose, Magnolia Ice Cream's stock rose during the playoffs. And the defending champions are banking on this renewed confidence when they clash against Welcoat Paints in their own semifinal duel at 4 p.m.

"The players have worked so hard," said coach Koy Banal, recalling the Wizards' rough start in the eliminations. "Right now, we're always playing like our backs are against the wall."

Montaña and Welcoat, though, have earned one-game incentives after claiming the top two spots in the eliminations. They only need to post two victories, while Magnolia and Granny Goose have to win thrice to advance to the finals.

The task, though, doesn't appear daunting for the Wizards, who haven't lost a game since Kelly Williams joined their lineup.

Williams, a 6-foot-6 find from Michigan, keyed Magnolia's turnaround by averaging 18.6 points and 9.6 rebounds in five games.

But fellow Fil-Am Anthony Washington is expected to give him a tough time. Washington, one of the top contenders for the Most Valuable Player award, has been leading Welcoat with 15.8 points and 9.6 rebounds. *Jasmine W. Payo*

ALEX Compton (right) is expected to be at the firing end anew of of Montaña's offense against Granny Goose today. AUGUST DELA CRUZ

Lady Archers outclass UST Tigresses

LA SALLE feasted on undermanned rival Santo Tomas, 25-22, 25-19, 25-20, yesterday, for its fifth straight win in the Shakey's V-League at the Rizal Memorial Coliseum.

"We played badly, but UST played worse," said La Salle coach Ramil de Jesus of their surprisingly easy victory over their UAAP rival despite lacking preparations.

Michelle Carolino blasted UST with 16 points, including 13 kills, while Manilla Santos added 13 to lead the defending champs past the Tigresses, who are sorely missing the services of ace spiker Joyce Pano for the third straight game.

Inaugural conference MVP Mary Jean Balse stepped up for the Tigresses with 11 points, while last season's best attacker Roxanne Pimentel made only five kills in the match that lasted a little over an hour.

Without Pano, who is mourning the death of her father, Santo Tomas, at 2-3, needs to chalk up a win versus Far Eastern on Thursday to remain in contention for a semifinals berth.

In the first game, Ateneo posted a 26-28, 25-20, 25-13 victory over Lyceum to claim its fourth win in the conference.

Ateneo, easily the tournament's darkhorse, held third place with a 4-2 win-loss record.

Rallying from a set down, the Lady Eagles, led by Cecile Tabuena and Patricia Taganas with 12 points a piece, posted an early 10-point lead in the fourth set to hand Lyceum its sixth loss in as many games.

Meanwhile, La Salle looks to extend its winning run at the expense of luckless Lyceum also on Thursday in this event backed by Accel, Mikasa, IBC 13 and Jemah Television. *Karla Tricia V. Magno*

SK sweeps Japan; RP tossers lose

SOUTH Korea dominated Japan in the first two sets then hung tough to complete a 25-16, 25-16, 25-20 victory yesterday in the semifinal round of the fifth Asian Youth Girls Volleyball Championships and assure itself of a stint in the World Championships. Meanwhile, the Philippines bowed to Thailand, 14-25, 14-25, 11-25, and will play Vietnam for seventh spot today. Thailand faces Australia, which rallied behind Rachel Rourke's 30 points to turn back Vietnam, 19-25, 25-22, 25-19 and 25-21, for fifth place. The Koreans broke away from a 7-7 count in the opener and took an 18-11 lead en route to taking the first set. The Koreans will meet the winner of the other semis duel between China and Chinese Taipei. The loser will play Japan for third place and the last World Championships berth.

Samsung Tour gets going at Northwoods

SAN RAFAEL, Bulacan—The Royal Northwoods Golf and Country Club makes its debut as a venue of the Samsung Amateur Golf Tour when it hosts the opening leg of the series starting today with reigning national grand finals champion Kim Chang-hoi leading the championship field.

Action fires off at 8 a.m. with the teenaged Kim, surprise winner at Mt. Malarayat last February, facing familiar faces including national training pool member Boyet Saragoza in the 72-hole main event of a multi-division tourney.

Saragoza is joined in the event ending Friday by young Canlubang teammate Michael Manotoc and national caddies champion Joseph Labajo, Omar Dungca and Jonel Ababa.

There are 27 entries in championship play, 11 of whom are Korean youngsters who have made the Bulacan course designed by Graham Marsh their base for training.

The bulk of the field of about a hundred plays Thursday and Friday as they vie for the the top awards in Classes A, B, C and D in the men's division and Classes A, B, C in the ladies' category.

The Tour's other sponsors are Tokyo Tokyo, KZG, Microtel, Coppertone Sport, Srixon, Philippine Airlines, Sunbolt, Rudy Project, C-Lium Fiber and Sports Plus. Media partners are Wave 89.1, Jam 88.3, 89.9, 99.5 RT, 103.5 K-Lite and Killer Bee.

The second leg will be hosted by Pueblo de Oro in Cagayan de Oro on June 29-July 2.

Boy Blue Ocampo of the organizing Professional Sports Management Group said they had to turn down many entries because they want to limit the field to a maximum of 120 players.

For inquiries on the Samsung Amateur Tour, call 635-0010 or fax 6315768.

SPORTSWATCH

Local standouts gain in Surigao netfest

SURIGAO CITY—Kent Tac-ac overwhelmed Mac Arnol of Bislig, 6-0, 6-1, in the boys' 14-under class and Juke Alban ousted Marlowe Lustre, 6-2, 6-1, in 18-under play as the two local standouts advanced to the next round of the 2005 Milo Junior Tennis Cup and regional workshop which got under way at the Surigao Tennis Club here yesterday. Tac-ac was joined in the next round by Amiel Aya-Ay of Maasin, Southern Leyte, who edged Leandro Fernandez of Butuan, 6-2, 4-6, 7-6, and by June Ryan Montalbo, also of Maasin, a 6-0, 6-4 victor over Princeton Gerapusco of Polomolok, South Cotabato. Alban also advanced in the Milo tournament organized by CTW, supported by adidas and sanctioned by the Philta together with Cagayan de Oro's Francis Casey Alcantara, who clobbered John Soques, 6-1, 6-0, and Lawrence Borres, who overcame Jeedree Tan, 6-4, 6-4. In the boys' 16-under, Nelvin Liza beat Leandro Fernandez, 6-2, 6-0, and Andrei Dizon ousted Amiel Aya-Ay, 6-0, 6-3.

Ateneo lass, PCHS rule tablenet tilt

ATENEO'S Larissa Hao Chin and the Philippine Cultural High School men's team crushed separate foes over the weekend to rule the fifth FCTTCND President's Cup invitational table tennis championship at the Starpaper gym in Gracepark Village, Caloocan City. Hao Chin overcame a sluggish start to beat RP training pool member Kheith Lhynne Cruz, 8-11, 5-11, 11-5, 11-7, and capture the women's single title. PCHS bagged the men's team title after defeating Philippine Tongho-Southern Luzon Polytechnic College, 3-1, in the finals of the event organized by FCTTND officers led by its president Charlie Lim, executive VP Philip Uy and VP Wilson Tan as well by its advisers led by Jimmy Tan, Crispin Chua, Nelson Lee, Joey Sy, Seetian Salvador and Gong Beng Chiat.

Big Dome rocks with NCA 7-cocker today

FIRST-CLASS cockfighting action returns to the Araneta Coliseum today as National Cockers Association (NCA) 7-Cock Derby gets going at 5 p.m. with the Jaen VGB Greenwood Group as sponsor. Slated today is the 3-cock elimination round, with the championship round kicking off on Thursday. Three more cockfests, including the 2005 World Slasher Cup 8-Cock Invitational Derby on June 14, 16 and 18, are on the NCA calendar before the NCA Cocker of the Year is finally known. The top contenders are Patrick Antonio, Gov. Ito Yñares and former ambassador Eduardo "Danding" Cojuangco, Rep. Gerry "Boy" Espina, Rudy Albano, Jun Santiago, Rep. Ronnie Puno and Boy Jiao, Ruel Feliciano, JV Magsaysay and Boy Marzo. In the most recent NCA derby on May 19, the Wild Wing Sundance entry of Puno and noted breeder Jiao of Rizal emerged as champion.

Ormoc derby gets powerhouse backing

THE ANNUAL Ormoc 5-Cock Derby kicks off on June 3 and 4 at the Valencia Sports Center with gamefowl industry leaders Thunderbird Multi-Grain Concentrate and Conditioner and Thunderbird Baby Stag Booster as sponsors. One of the Visayas' most prestigious cockfighting events, the derby is hosted by Elmer Codilla in cooperation with Mayor Biboy Codilla. The two-day encounter is also supported by congressmen Dodong Codilla of Leyte, Nonoy Libanan of Eastern Samar, Jing Paras of Guihulngan, Butch Pichay of Surigao del Sur and Gov. Tony Kho of Masbate. Interested participants may call Elmer Codilla at (053) 255-8193, 255-5828; Segio Ocaña (Cebu) at 0921-952-4082, Elvis Calunod (Guihulngan) at 0920-423-4239; Neneng Cada (Eastern Samar) at 0927-911-2493, Minel Betonio (Masbate) at 0918-556-7116; Jeffrey Dubal (Ormoc) at 0927-231-0933, Jun-jun Durano (Ormoc) at 0916-765-3795.

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LOW AMATEUR: Juvic Pagunsan (right), with daughter LJ, is congratulated by National Golf Association of the Philippines president Benny Gopez for topping the amateur field with a 283 total during the recent 89th Philippine Open at the Mount Malarayat in Lipa City.

KING OF HOPE

In the pocket for 'The Lion'

ALEX "The Lion" Pagulayan added the Hope P1-M All-Filipino Billiards Open II championship to his vast title collection, beating defending champion Francisco "Django" Bustamante, 15-14, in a heart-stopping contest before a big crowd at the LS-2 of IBC 13 in Quezon City late Sunday night.

Finding Bustamante a much tougher opponent in their second meeting in three days, Pagulayan dug deep into his bag of tricks to nail the P500,000 top prize put up by Hope in cooperation with Puyat Sports and Jemah Television.

It was the second major title in as many months for Pagulayan, who earlier ruled the Canadian Open.

But the Hope All-Filipino title proved to be a lot sweeter for Pagulayan not only because he avenged his loss to Bustamante in their championship meeting here last February.

"It feels so good to finally win here in the country," said Pagulayan, the 26-year old Filipino-Canadian from Toronto. "I really feel like half a million peso richer."

Pagulayan clinched the win a few moments after Bustamante gambled on holing the blue ball via a cushion shot instead of a push.

ALEX Pagulayan (right) receives his check from billiards "godfather" Aristeo "Putch" Puyat.

When Bustamante missed, Pagulayan knew the title was his for the taking.

Bustamante, who dropped a 3-9 decision to Pagulayan in the quarterfinal round Friday, settled for the runner-up purse of P200,000.

Former World Pool champion Efren "Bata" Reyes and three-time Southeast Asian Games gold medalist Lee Van Corteza, the losing semifinalists, won P50,000 apiece.

Reyes lost to Bustamante, while Corteza bowed to Pagulayan in the semifinals.

Aside from beating Bustamante and Corteza, Pagulayan also bested qualifier Carlo Viado, 9-3.

Before eliminating Reyes, Bustamante won over Antonio Lining, 9-1, Jeffrey de Luna, 9-0, and Antonio Gabica, 9-4, in the eliminations.

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Viloria's KO victim slips into a coma

AN AMERICAN fighter of Filipino lineage knocked out his foe, who later went into coma following their bout last Sunday underneath the Julio Cesar Chavez-Ivan Robinson "Adios" card at the Staples Center in Los Angeles.

Brian Viloria, who fought in the 2000 Olympics and is now handled by Manny Pacquiao's trainer, Freddie Roach, won at the 55th-second mark of the sixth round when the referee stopped his bout with Ruben Contreras of Mexico.

The outclassed Contreras suddenly collapsed moments after the fight was halted and was rushed to the nearby California Hospital Medical Center.

The Ciudad Juarez, Mexico, fighter then underwent surgery to relieve pressure from bleeding on his brain. He was in a medically induced coma for the next 72 hours to give the cerebral swelling time to reduce.

The undefeated Viloria (17-0, 11 KOs) was using the Contreras bout as a tune-up fight for his July 30 challenge to World Boxing Council light flyweight champ Eric Ortiz at the Mandalay Bay Resort and Casino in Las Vegas. *Salven L. Lagumbay, Contributor*

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EASTERN CONFERENCE FINALS

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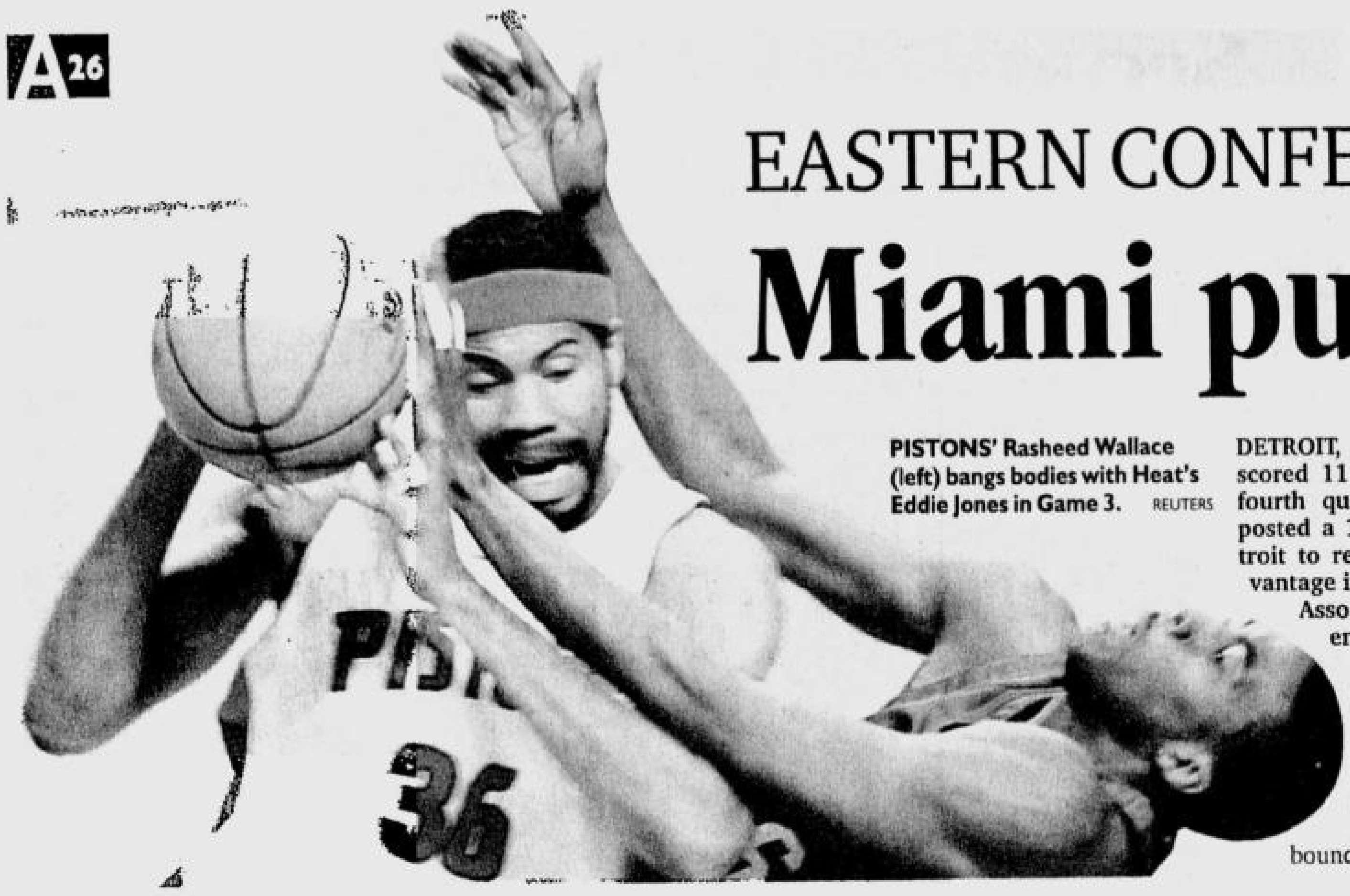

PISTONS' Rasheed Wallace (left) bangs bodies with Heat's Eddie Jones in Game 3. REUTERS

DETROIT, Michigan—Eddie Jones scored 11 of his 19 points in the fourth quarter Sunday as Miami posted a 113-104 victory over Detroit to recapture home court advantage in the National Basketball Association Eastern Conference finals.

The defending NBA champion Pistons recovered from blowing a double-digit lead in the second half to win the series opener in Miami.

But the Heat have rebounded to win the last two games to take a two-games-to-one lead in the best-of-seven series.

Dwyane Wade and Shaquille O'Neal looked unstoppable in the first half, and the Heat led by as many as 10 points in the third quarter before the Pistons rallied.

The Pistons opened the fourth quarter with an 11-2 run and took an 86-81 lead when Wade went to the bench with his fifth foul with 7:57 remaining.

But Jones showed his leadership by scoring nine points in an 18-5 surge.

"I just knew I had to be aggressive," said the 11-year veteran, who started the burst with a three-pointer with 7:43 left, added anot
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O'Neal, shooting j

Federer gains quarters; Davenport vs Pierce

PARIS—When Roger Federer charged forward and blew an easy volley, he glared at the ball bouncing at his feet, swiped at it in anger, kicked it and still couldn't get it over the net.

Federer was frustrated, but hardly on the verge of defeat. He was up by two sets and 3-0 in the third set. But his standards are high and, aside from the occasional misplay, he has met them thus far at the French Open.

The top-ranked Federer equaled his best showing at Roland Garros when he advanced to the quarterfinals Sunday, shaking off the errant volley to beat an ailing Carlos Moya, 6-1, 6-4, 6-3.

Federer improved to 45-2 this year. He has yet to drop a set through four rounds at the only Grand Slam event he hasn't won.

"I'm very relieved in a way, and happy to have come so far after a few years of tough times here in Paris," Federer said.

"I've won four matches, which is good. But of course once you get to the quarters, you want more, especially because I haven't been using my reserve tank yet. I still have a lot of energy left. I'm looking forward to hopefully another few more matches."

Moya, the 1998 champion, gave Federer little trouble while playing with a sore shoulder that hindered his serve and forehand. The Spaniard said he needs rest and isn't sure whether he'll play Wimbledon.

"I'm glad that I managed to save some energy," Federer said. "I'm surprised that he finished the match."

Federer's opponent Tuesday will be 90th-ranked Victor Hanescu, who upset No. 10 David Nalbandian, 6-3, 4-6, 5-7, 6-1, 6-2. Hanescu, who arrived in Paris with a record of 6-9 this year, will play in his first Grand Slam quarterfinal.

"When I started to play tennis, I was dreaming to be here," Hanescu said. "My family is a poor family. When I was young, we didn't have so much money even to eat sometimes. Now I'm here and very happy."

No. 9 Guillermo Canas and No. 28 Nicolas Kiefer completed victories in third-round matches suspended Saturday because of darkness.

On the women's side, top-ranked Lindsay Davenport will play in the quarterfinals for the first time in six years Tuesday when she faces 2000 champion Mary Pierce of France.

Davenport won in three sets for the fourth time in as many matches, beating two-time runner-up Kim Clijsters ,1-6, 7-5, 6-3. Davenport, the tournament's only remaining American, male or female, seeks the lone major title she has yet to win.

"Right now I'm just ecstatic to be where I am," she said.

Pierce had French fans groaning when she failed to convert 10 match points, but she finally finished off No. 8-seeded Patty Schnyder, 6-1, 1-6, 6-4.

"I'm so tired," Pierce said. "I don't know whether to laugh or cry."

She's 2-8 against Davenport, but they haven't met since 1999.

"She's No. 1 in the world," Pierce said. "On paper I shouldn't win. But I'm playing my favorite tournament. You know, nothing to lose."

Also making the final eight was 15-year-old Bulgarian Sesil Karatantcheva, who beat Emmanuelle Gagliardi 7-5, 6-3. Karatantcheva, who made a name for herself by beating Venus Williams in the third round, is now making it hard for friends and family to reach her.

"I'm not even answering my phone," she said. "I had 20 missed calls yesterday. A lot of people are very happy for me, a lot of kids, a lot of adults."

Karatantcheva's opponent Tuesday will be No. 16-seeded Elena Likhovtseva, who needed 2 hours, 49 minutes to win an all-Russian matchup by beating No. 4 Elena Dementieva, 7-6 (3), 5-7, 7-5.

The match between Rafael Nadal and Frenchman Sebastien Grosjean was first interrupted by jeers, then by rain. Drizzle forced suspension of play until Monday, with Nadal leading, 6-4, 3-6, 3-0.

Fans began whistling in the second set when a linesman ruled a shot by Nadal on the line, helping him win the point for a 1-0 lead. When Damien Steiner refused to climb down from the umpire's chair to check the mark, Grosjean became incensed.

Jeering by fans delayed play for about 10 minutes, until it faded when Grosjean made a gesture appealing for quiet. *AP*

RUSSIAN Maria Sharapova fire
their fourth round match. Shara

Jones beaten into second place over 100 meters

HENGELO, Netherlands—Triple Olympic champion Marion Jones, shunned by Europe's leading promoters because of her association with the notorious Balco laboratory, was beaten into second place over 100 meters in the Dutch town of Hengelo on Sunday.

Jones, who failed to win a medal at last year's Athens Olympics after winning three golds at the 2000 Sydney Games, finished well behind her former training partner Chandra Sturrup of the Bahamas.

The 29-year-old American clocked 11.29 seconds, 0.14 of a second behind Sturrup, and clearly has a lot of hard work ahead if she hopes to qualify for the world championships in Helsinki in August.

Promoters of the Euro-Meetings group, who between them organize nearly 50 competitions, have refused to invite Jones to their meetings after a federal investigation into Balco.

Her partner Tim Montgomery, the world 100 meters record holder, faces a life ban after being charged with serious doping offences by the US Anti-Doping Agency (Usada). Usada has also investigated Jones, although she has not been charged with any offense. Neither athlete has ever failed a drugs test and both deny ever taking performance-enhancing substances.

Asked about the European ban, Jones told reporters: "It doesn't have anything to do with me and everything to do with me.

"It's obvious people want to see me. I can fill up stadiums.

I can only control what I can do. I can't control what other people do. Now my aim is to make the US team." Jones is scheduled to run in Milan next Wednesday before flying back to the United States.

Ethiopian Kenenisa Bekele's attempt on his own world 10,000 meters record was thwarted by gusting winds which gathered strength during the evening.

Bekele, who completed his fourth world cross country long and short course double this year just 10 weeks after the sudden death of his fiancee, broke the 5,000 mark at the same meeting last year and looked full of running on Sunday. *Reuters*

Boxing a way out for Indian women

CALCUTTA, India—Every afternoon, veiled young women from a squalid Muslim quarter in Calcutta walk to a public park where they swap their traditional attire for T-shirts, shorts and boxing gloves.

For two hours, they sweat it out in a makeshift boxing ring with just a metal sheet for a roof, often to the amusement of passers-by and children playing nearby.

Inspired by American champion Laila Ali, daughter of Muhammad Ali, many of them see boxing as a way to escape poverty and rigid social barriers in a country where women often have few career opportunities.

Women boxers have already made an impact on India, a cricket-mad country starved of major sporting success after winning just one medal in each of the last three Olympics.

Light-flyweight Hmangte Marykom won a world boxing championship in 2003.

"We realize we have taken up a sport which is uncharted territory for women, more so for Muslim girls in India," 24-year-old Razia Shabnam told Reuters.

Despite stiff family opposition, Shabnam was one of the first from her neighborhood to take up boxing. She is now a coach and international referee.

The young women now trying to emulate Shabnam come from Calcutta's Kidderpore district, a shanty town by the river Ganges dotted with gambling dens, brothels and illicit liquor sellers.

The Kidderpore women were drawn to boxing after watching local young men in action, including Mohammed Ali Qamar, who won a light-flyweight gold medal at the 2002 Commonwealth Games.

"When we watched the boys we felt we too could do it," said 20-year-old Noor Afroz. "But getting our parents to agree was unimaginable." *Reuters*

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LUIS
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WORLD VOLLEY: Brazilian Andres Nascimento (left) slams the ball past Venezuelan Luis Diaz during their 2005 FIVB Men's World League match in Caracas. Defending champion Brazil won, 23-25, 25-21, 25-10, 20-25, 15-13. AFP

Beckham, Owen bring fresh legs to England

CHICAGO, Illinois—David Beckham and Michael Owen will come to the rescue for a hurting young England squad that might be without new hero Kieran Richardson and veteran defender Sol Campbell for Tuesday's match with Colombia.

Real Madrid stars Beckham and Owen bring much-needed fresh legs to an injury-bedeviled England squad that suffered more setbacks in a 2-1 friendly triumph over the United States here Saturday.

"We played well in the first half then in the second half we picked up a few injuries and it seemed the traveling caught up with us a bit," said England midfielder Joe Cole of English champions Chelsea.

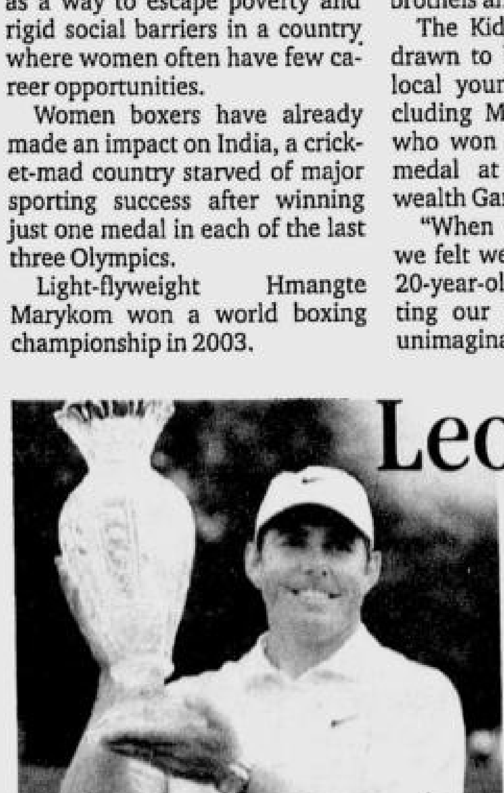
Richardson scored two first-half goals on his England debut but departed in the 59th minute with a strained hamstring and is questionable for England's US tour concluder Tuesday at East Rutherford, New Jersey.

"I felt a little twinge in my hamstring so we will see how it settles down," Richardson said. "I still can't believe I'm here. If I had gotten a third chance, I might have had a hat trick." Campbell, filling in as captain in Beckham's absence, twisted his left ankle on the rock-hard Soldier Field pitch in the opening seconds and was replaced at half-time. An MRI scan Monday will decide his availability to face Colombia.

"Hopefully it's not ligament damage but we'll have to wait and see," said the 30-year-old Arsenal defender, who has struggled with injuries all season. "It affected my performance. I couldn't really do what I wanted to do. I kind of played through it." Ashley Cole, another Arsenal defender, went out with a hamstring pull against the Americans. His chances are considered better for a Tuesday return.

Already out were Chelsea stars Frank Lampard and John Terry, Manchester United's Wayne Rooney and Rio Ferdinand, Tottenham goalkeeper Paul Robinson and Steven Gerrard and Jamie Carragher from Champions League stunners Liverpool. *AFP*

Leonard holds off Toms, rules St. Jude Classic



JUSTIN Leonard shows off his Fed Ex St. Jude Classic trophy. AFP

MEMPHIS, Tennessee—Justin Leonard needed every stroke of his eight-shot third round cushion as he held off a charging David Toms on Sunday to win the St. Jude Classic.

Leonard's third-round lead was the largest on the PGA Tour this year. On Sunday, he struggled to a three-over 73, but for 14-under 266, eking out a one-shot victory over Toms, who was trying to win his third straight St. Jude title.

In picking up his second victory of the season and 10th of his career, Leonard became the first player since Vijay Singh at the 2004 PGA Championship to win without recording a birdie in the final round.

Leonard carded three bogeys and 15 pars to take home the first prize of $882,000.

"It started out pretty easy and pretty comfortable. I was hitting the ball in the right spots," Leonard said after the first wire-to-wire victory of his career. "This golf course was very difficult today in this kind of wind." Leonard saved par from the rough at 17 and hit his approach close to a grandstand near the 18th green, but had a two-shot cushion allowing him to close out with a bogey and hold on for the win.

"I was unable to birdie 16 so then it got pretty tight," Leonard said. "I kind of chopped it around on 17 a little bit, but I hit a really nice shot and made the best putt I made all week right there. That gave me a cushion." Toms, in contrast, closed with a 63 that included an inward 30 to put the pressure on Leonard.

Toms, who needed only 21 putts Sunday, birdied 13 and 14, eagled the par-five 16th and chipped in from 64 feet for birdie at 17 that pulled him within two shots of Leonard, who was in the process of bogeying 15.

Toms gave himself a chance for another birdie at 18, but slid a 15-footer just to the right of the cup.

"I got to 18 and obviously wanted to make birdie there and finish it off," Toms said. "That was the only time I saw (Leonard) at 15-under. That is the only time I knew I was within two. I felt like if I made that putt, there was a chance he could bogey 17 or 18, which he did. I didn't hit a good putt there on the last hole." Having won the Bob Hope Chrysler Classic in January, Leonard became the fifth multiple winner on tour this year, joining Tiger Woods, Phil Mickelson, Singh and Kenny Perry.

Fred Funk finished alone in third after a 68 for 271, while Davis Love and Heath Slocum tied for fourth a further shot back. *AFP*

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the line in the playoffs, made his first six attempts in the fourth quarter and went 8-of-12 overall.

"I'm not the type to worry about percentages," O'Neal said. "We needed them. I just took my time, stepped up and hit them." The physical game featured 62 fouls and 97 free throws. Miami went 38-of-54 at the line while Detroit was 28-of-43.

"There were 31 free throws missed, so neither team shot great," said Miami coach Stan Van Gundy. "We shot a bit better percentage. That's rare for us, and we'll take it."

Wade scored 36 points in his second straight big game, and O'Neal added 24 for the top-seeded Heat, who improved to 5-0 on the road in the postseason.

After scoring just 16 points in the series opener, Wade has exploded for 76 in the last two games. He was at his best in the first half in this one, scoring 21 on 9-of-14 shooting.

O'Neal also looked like his superstar self in the first half when he scored 14 points on 7-of-8 shooting. He went just 1-of-5 in the second half.

Richard Hamilton scored 33 points and Billups and Tayshaun Prince added 18 apiece for the Pistons, who host game four on Tuesday. *AFP*

MIAMI's Alonzo Mourning reacts after forcing a Detroit turnover. AP

Fast, lucky Alonso tops Europe GP

NUERBURGRING, Germany—Sometimes it helps to be fast and lucky.

Fernando Alonso was both in winning the European Grand Prix Sunday. He stayed close enough to Kimi Raikkonen during the race as both set a punishing pace. Then when a tire failure caused Raikkonen's suspension to break just as the last lap began, Alonso was there to capitalize.

After a fourth-place finish in Monaco last week—his first time outside the top three in 2005—Alonso and his Renault were back on the winning step of the podium.

"We were very lucky today, but we were very strong also," Alonso said after his fifth career victory and fourth of the season.

The Formula One season now shifts to North America, with the Canadian Grand Prix on June 12 and the United States Grand Prix a week later.

ALONSO

Alonso holds a huge lead in the standings with 59 points, ahead of Raikkonen and Jarno Trulli with 27 each

"If we keep this consistency every time we will have more and more points," said Alonso, who is bidding to become the youngest driver to win the world title. He turns 24 in July.

"We had a very good car in Monaco and we didn't take as many points as we believed were possible. To be probably the best car on the grid again, to manage the tires in the race, is probably better news for the rest of the season—than to win the race," Alonso said.

It helped when Raikkonen, in command of the race from the start, had tire problems. Leading by five seconds with five laps to go, Raikkonen, in a McLaren-Mercedes, saw his lead shrink lap-by-lap.

"The team kept telling me that we were quicker than Kimi, to push him, push McLaren, we had to push them to see if they had a problem," Alonso said. "In the end the team was right and there was a failure with the tire or the suspension."

Raikkonen entered the last lap with a 1.5-second lead when the tire blew out, sending Raikkonen skidding off the track before the first turn.

He said he had a locked tire for the last 20 laps which caused the flat spot. The wheel was barely held on to the car by the tether cord as he hit the wall and bounced over the gravel.

"I had a well-balanced car until a flat spot on my right front tire caused terrible vibrations which eventually led to suspension failure," Raikkonen said. "This is just a sad result."

Alonso saw everything unfold before him. *AP*

**a backhand at Spain's Nuria Llagostera Vives during
pova was ahead, 6-2, 3-3, when play was stopped.** AFP

Delgado homers as Marlins trip Mets, stop 4-game skid

Carlos Delgado hit a three-run homer, and Josh Beckett allowed four hits over seven innings as the Florida Marlins beat the New York Mets, 6-3, on Sunday.

The Marlins scored five runs in the seventh inning, highlighted by Delgado's ninth homer, to salvage the final game of the four-game series and snap a four-game losing streak.

Heath Bell (0-2) replaced Tom Glavine to start the seventh with the Mets leading 2-1, but he was pulled after giving up consecutive singles to Luis Castillo and Miguel Cabrera. Delgado hit a 3-0 pitch from Koo Dae-sung over the right field wall for a 4-2 lead.

Reds 11, Pirates 2

In Cincinnati, Ken Griffey Jr. and Jason LaRue homered during Cincinnati's six-run second inning and the Reds earned a split of the four-game series.

Griffey drove in a season-high five runs, and LaRue went 3-for-4 with three RBIs and three runs scored as the Reds matched their largest winning margin of the Major League Baseball season. The Pirates have lost six of eight.

Braves 7, Phillies 2

In Atlanta, Ryan Langerhans hit a two-run triple in the Braves' three-run fifth inning and Kelly Johnson made two strong defensive plays in his MLB debut as Atlanta averted a three-game sweep.

Tim Hudson (6-3) needed 99 pitches to last seven innings. He gave up six hits and walked five batters while allowing two runs.

Astros 2, Brewers 1

In Milwaukee, Andy Pettitte pitched six shutout innings, and Houston won a road series for the first time this year.

Pettitte (3-5) missed his last start due to tightness in his left elbow, but snapped a personal three-game losing streak to win for the first time since May 2. He gave up consecutive hits to begin the game, but did not allow another hit until the sixth inning.

Houston had only five hits but improved to 5-22 on the road by winning two of three from the Brewers. The Astros lost their first eight road series of the year.

Nationals 3, Cardinals 2

In St. Louis, Livan Hernandez wrapped up the first five-victory month of his career to become the National League's second eight-game winner, and Brad Wilkerson had three doubles for Washington.

Jamey Carroll's RBI single capped a three-run fifth for the Nationals (25-25), who avoided getting swept for the second straight series and ended a five-game losing streak.

Cubs 11, Rockies 6

In Chicago, Aramis Ramirez had three hits, including a homer, and four RBIs, and Derrek Lee went 3-for-4 to lead Chicago over Colorado.

Jeromy Burnitz added a three-run homer in a five-run, sixth-inning rally that put the Cubs ahead for good. He also drove in a run with a groundout.

Todd Walker had his first career pinch-hit homer for the Cubs, who at 24-24 climbed back to .500 for the first time since May 1.

Padres 9, Giants 6

In San Francisco, Damian Jackson hit a tiebreaking, two-run single in the ninth inning, and San Diego completed its first three-game sweep at SBC Park.

Chris Hammond (5-0) pitched two innings for the win after the Padres couldn't hold a three-run lead for starter Adam Eaton, who was denied his career-best sixth straight win.

Trevor Hoffman worked the ninth for his 13th straight save, 16th of the year and career-high 12th in May.

Dodgers 6, Diamondbacks 3

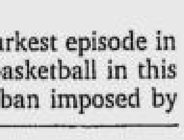
In Phoenix, Jeff Weaver earned his first win in four starts and Los Angeles Dodgers won a series for the first time in three weeks.

The Dodgers scored five times in the first three innings. Los Angeles had lost five straight series since winning two of three at Cincinnati from May 6-8.

Cesar Izturis was 3-for-5 with a triple, and Jayson Werth doubled twice, scored and drove in a run. *AP*

Darkest episode

SPECTATOR



Al S. Mendoza

WAS it the right move?

If it were the Rotary asking, the answer might not have sat well with the Rotary.

As the Rotarians put it: "Is it fair?"

But I guess there is never any fairness in nine out of 10 issues.

Ask any BAP man if the POC suspension on BAP was fair or not, you'd readily get a "no, not fair" for an answer.

But as far as the 37 of 38 NSAs (Manny Lopez of boxing was absent during the POC General Assembly) who voted for the suspension of the BAP were concerned, they'd say the suspension was fair. It was so because their action spoke for itself.

I say the suspension was the right move.

Basketball had terribly suffered overseas the past few years because of a misguided direction from the BAP leadership.

For so long now, the BAP had programs not wholly in unison with the majority of basketball stakeholders. The BAP had too many enemies it would soon become like a walking time bomb, ready to explode anytime.

It did, after it had succumbed to its own wild, aimless blows.

When an association is hit left and right by hostile forces and it chooses to ignore instead of face them head-on, it is bound to crumble like a dam weakened by rampaging waters.

It is vulnerable and, sooner or later, it will take the road to perdition.

Its eventual collapse will be manifested by illogic, stupid moves if you will, such as when the BAP reneged on its commitment with the POC to cooperate in the formation of teams for the Seaba and SEA Games competitions this year.

That was the final blow. Fatal.

Its subsequent move to strip Go Teng Kok, its last remaining benefactor, of his position as project director for the Fiba-Asia championship in Manila was but one of the last gasps of one doomed to die.

Before Peping Cojuangco, the Olympic boss, made formal the POC move to suspend the BAP, all avenues had been explored for the action to be hitch-free. The turning point was, Peping had gotten the Fiba to its side before declaring the BAP at fault.

This has been the darkest episode in the fabled history of basketball in this country, eclipsing the ban imposed by the Fiba on the Philippines when the country barred the entry of Yugoslavia into an international tournament we hosted in the Sixties.

"It pains me to do this, but we are doing this in the interest of country and flag," said Peping Cojuangco. "We cannot allow anyone to just turn his back on a document duly signed, lest we allow a farce to exist in our Olympic movement."

Peping getting more than 2/3 of the 38 NSAs to support his move against the BAP spoke volumes of how influential and powerful he is to his colleagues in the Olympic body.

Add the fact that Peping's line was politically correct from the very start. Meaning, he was right all along, thus the concurrence by a unanimous vote from the NSAs.

Where will the BAP go from here?

Sorry, but I haven't the slightest idea, fellas.

***

FASTBREAK. Tomorrow, June 1, a day before Dayong's birthday, my nephew, Joseph, will tie the knot with Grace (Bulanon) at the Tiera Pura chapel in Quezon City. Theirs was a virtual whirlwind romance. Joseph, who was born here but was raised in Toronto, had met Grace during a visit. It wasn't actually love at first sight. But after several overseas calls after Joseph had gone back to Canada, love would bloom in no time. The wedding gave my brother, Kuya Pepito, the chance to test his wits in overcoming his fear of flying. Away from home for 15 years, Kuya Pepito had to kill almost two bottles of red wine to survive what he called was an "18-hour ordeal" on board a JAL jet from Toronto to Manila via Tokyo. A non-drinker, Kuya Pepito told his bosom buddy, Boni M. Sison: "I'm surprised that I never got drunk at all." My family and I wish Joseph and Grace all the best. May they live happily ever after.

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Which shows can be censored?

By Marinel R. Cruz

ONLY television programs that "sensationalize and glorify sexual prurience and gratuitous violence" can be sanctioned by the Movie and Television Review and Classification Board.

MTRCB Chief Marissa Laguardia clarified this two days after the Board took back its order requiring prior state approval for public affairs shows.

In a phone interview with INQUIRER Entertainment yesterday, Laguardia said an MTRCB committee would determine which programs would thus be monitored.

The MTRCB last week issued a memorandum, dated May 17, requiring TV shows to submit materials to the MTRCB "for review and approval prior to telecast."

But in a memo dated May 30, a copy of which was sent to INQUIRER Entertainment also yesterday, Laguardia said "it was never my intention to prohibit, restrain or disallow the broadcast of any public affairs program. [The previous memo] was intended to check media abuses, specifically programs that appeal to prurient interest or programs that satisfy only the craving for gratuitous sex and/or violence."

Laguardia added that the Board would "continuously uphold the constitutional rights of media to freedom of expression."

The May 17 memo cited the Supreme Court decision and Presidential Decree 1986 that said all public affairs programs, news documentaries, socio-political editorials and programs of the same category were subject to review by the MTRCB.

Basil Valdez remembers dear friend Richard Tann

By Bayani San Diego Jr.

THE 1970's CIRCUS BAND including Basil, front row left, and Richard, back row second from right.

HE was like a brother to me," balladeer Basil Valdez described his good friend, fellow Circus Band "graduate" and former manager Richard Tann, who succumbed to a heart attack on May 28.

"We were friends even before Circus Band," Valdez told INQUIRER Entertainment on the first night of Tann's wake at the Sanctuario de San Antonio in Forbes Park.

Valdez, an Atenean, met Tann when the latter was still in Xavier High School, sometime in 1970. "That was in a three-day retreat, Days With the Lord," Valdez recalled. "I later joined his group, Chinese Catholic Youth."

Before Circus

They teamed up as a duet, specializing in folk songs by Simon & Garfunkel and performing in different campuses.

Valdez persuaded Tann to join the Circus Band in 1972. They shared the stage with Jacqui Magno, Tillie Moreno, Pat Castillo, Pabs Dadivas, Hajji Alejandro and Ray-An Fuentes.

"He had a unique voice," Valdez said.

Tann eventually chose to stay in the sidelines, acting as Valdez's first manager and steering the latter's career to the pinnacle with such OPM classics as "Ngayon at Kailanman" and "Kastilyong Buhangin" in the mid-'70s.

Valdez is now managed by Wyngard Tracy, but he kept in constant touch with Tann. The last time the two old friends were together was "exactly a year and two days ago," Valdez recalled, during a show at the Westin Philippine Plaza. Valdez said he greeted Tann on the latter's 51st birthday, May 5.

"He had four sisters, and his father died when he was 14," Valdez related. "He regarded me as the older brother he never had. He used to run to me for everything. He confided his problems in me."

Tann's remains will be cremated today.

HUNTER Thompson (left) and Johnny Depp. AP

Depp grant's his pal's wish

DENVER, Colorado—The ashes of legendary "gonzo journalist" Hunter S. Thompson will be fired from a cannon housed in a giant fist-shaped monument paid for by movie star Johnny Depp, a friend told AFP on Friday.

Depp, who played the counter-culture icon in the 1998 film "Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas," is financing the 45-meter (150-foot) steel monument that will be the centerpiece of Thompson's Aug. 20 memorial service.

Star-studded

The service, to be held in the Colorado hamlet where the 67-year-old Thompson shot himself on Feb. 20, will also be attended by Hollywood luminaries Sean Penn and Jack Nicholson, said Thompson's friend Troy Hooper.

"Johnny got involved with this project shortly after Hunter's suicide," said Hooper, who is also associate editor of Thompson's local newspaper, the Aspen Daily News.

"Hunter had discussed this idea of having his remains fired out of a cannon on film and in the interviews and Johnny has the means and the wherewithal to make this happen," Hooper told AFP.

Sunset rites

The monument that will house the cannon is already being erected near Thompson's fortified compound in Woody Creek, not far from the ski town of Aspen, ahead of the sunset ceremony to be held exactly six months after the author's death.

The cannon will blast and scatter Thompson's remains across his property in his last great public stunt.

"It will be very fitting—Hunter probably wouldn't have showed up for it himself if he were still here, but he would have loved the adoration," Hooper said.

AFP

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6 HOUSE OF WAX

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5 GOLD (DOLBY) HOUSE OF WAX
6 GOLD (SDDS) MADAGASCAR
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2 LA VISA LOCA
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2 BIKINI OPEN
3 (DOLBY) KINGDOM OF HEAVEN

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AMITYVILLE HORROR
12:30 / 2:40 / 4:50 / 7:00 / 9:10
MADAGASCAR
1:00 / 3:00 / 5:00 / 7:00 / 9:00
LA VISA LOCA
12:30 / 2:45 / 5:00 / 7:15 / 9:30
UNLEASHED
12:10 / 2:30 / 4:50 / 7:10 / 9:30
KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
12:40 / 3:40 / 6:40 / 9:40
STAR WARS - EPISODE III
11:50 /12:30 /12:50 / 2:50 / 3:30 / 3:50
5:50 / 6:30 / 6:50 / 8:50 / 9:30 / 9:50
GLOBE PLATINUM CINEMA
Pre-Opening Screenings P 249 / P299
STAR WARS - EPISODE III
1:10 / 4:10 / 7:10 / 10:10

ALI MALL CINEMAS
1 STAR WARS - EPISODE III
11:50 / 2:50 / 5:50 / 8:50
2 LA VISA LOCA
11:20 / 1:35 / 3:50 / 6:05/ 8:20
3 UNLEASHED
11:25 / 1:45 / 4:05 / 6:25 / 8:45
4 HOUSE OF WAX
12:40 / 3:10 / 5:40 / 8:10
5 MADAGASCAR
12:00 / 2:00 / 4:00 / 6:00 / 8:00
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June 15, Wednesday, 8pm

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New film treats coming up

The list includes 'Batman Begins' and 'The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy'

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

HOW IS the current film year shaping up? Take note of these opening dates for some potentially eventful films in the next four months (with highlights and sidelights):

June 15, "Batman Begins." The Batmobile has had a makeover, plus other innovations make this production an attractive viewing proposition.

June 22, "The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy." **Sam Rockwell** based his portrayal of the two-headed president of the galaxy (one head is usually hidden) on three models: **Elvis Presley, Freddie Mercury** and **Bill Clinton**!

July 13, "Herbie: Fully loaded." The Volkswagen Beetle is still No. 53. Original "Love Bug" producer **Bill Walsh** chose that double digit as a salute to **Don Drysdale**, the great Dodgers pitcher.

July 20, "The Island." While Puma tennis shoes should spike in popularity after audiences see that's what **Ewan McGregor, Scarlett Johanssen** and thousands of other workers are wearing in the film's mysterious facility.

July 27, "Stealth." When a picture of the Talon (a fighter plane invented for the film) was circulated online, the Navy received many calls asking about the "new" aircraft!

Aug. 3, "Charlie and the Chocolate Factory." The candy-making squirrels in Willy Wonka's factory are real squirrels, trained from birth to act on cue.

Aug. 10, "Bewitched." **Nicole Kidman** had to practice a lot to get Samantha's trademark nose twitch exactly right. During filming, the cast and crew were taped trying to wiggle their noses. Besides Kidman, two out of the 120 were gifted at it.

Aug. 24, "Deuce Bigalow: European Gigolo." After boasting about his skills at making shrimp scampi, **Rob Schneider** was invited by an Amsterdam restaurant to take over its kitchen and prepare the dish. Schneider made dinner for the movie's cast and crew, and earned a permanent place on the menu: Diners at the Palladio can now order Scampi à la Bigalow.

Aug. 31, "The Sisterhood of the Traveling Pants." To help the film's four young actresses get into their roles, director **Ken Kwapis** took them to a thrift shop, handed each of them $75, and instructed them to pick out clothes for themselves and their friends.

Aug. 31, "Dark Water." In this psychological thriller, **Jennifer Connelly** is plagued by leaks in her apartment—lots of them. More than 100,000 gallons of water were used during filming.

Sept. 7, "The Dukes of Hazzard." So badly did **Jessica Simpson** want to be cast as Daisy Duke that, while being considered for the role, she named her dog Daisy, hoping it would bring her luck. It did!

Sept. 21, "The Longest Yard." After studying under ex-NFL quarterback **Sean Salisbury, Adam Sandler** impressed onlookers when he hit ex-Cowboy **Michael Irvin** with a perfect 45-yard spiral.

Were watching out especially for: "Batman Begins," "Charlie and the Chocolate Factory," "Bewitched," "The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy," "Dark Water" and "The Longest Yard." Not bad, not bad at all!

Feedback

FROM **Loi R. Landicho** of Makati City: "Filipinos are known for parodying titles of American movies and television shows. Capitalizing on the 'recall factor,' local producers use them to generate revenues at the tills or to obtain higher viewership, as if we've run out of original ideas.

"Months back, GMA-7 came up with '30 Days,' a reality show that gave idle or inactive celebrities a second chance to revive their flagging careers.

"I almost forgot that we had '30 Days' on local TV until I read reports that director **Morgan Spurlock** of the Oscar-nominated documentary 'Super Size Me' was brewing up a new reality TV show. The production will follow a 'fundamentalist Christian' living as a Muslim, to find out what it's like to face the prejudice that many Muslims in America have had to deal with since Sept. 11.

"The title of the show? '30 Days'!—Who says local think tanks could never be first, and original?"

'The Beekeeper'

THIS year, Tori Amos unveils two exciting projects: a new CD, "The Beekeeper," and her first book, "Tori Amos: Piece by Piece," co-written with **Ann Powers**. The CD includes cuts like "Sweet the Sting," "Sleeps with Butterflies," and "Ribbons Undone," on which Tori incorporates vintage organs, Afro-Cuban drums and Gospel choirs, working once again with longtime partners, drummer **Matt Chamberlain** and bassist **John Evans**. Log on to www.sonymusic.ph for more information.

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1 MADAGASCAR
MTRCB: GP
12:40, 3:00, 5:20, 7:40, 10:00

2 STAR WARS III
MTRCB: GP
1:30, 4:20 7:10 10:00

3 HOUSE OF WAX
MTRCB: R-13
11:25, 2:00, 4:35, 7:10, 9:50

4 MADAGASCAR
MTRCB: GP
12:10, 2:30, 4:50, 7:10, 9:30

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1 STAR WARS III: REVENGE OF THE SITH
10:20, 1:20, 4:20, 7:20, 10:20
GP

2 MADAGASCAR
10:55, 1:05, 3:15, 5:25
7:35, 10:20
GP

3 STAR WARS III: REVENGE OF THE SITH
11:05, 2:05, 5:05,
8:05, 11:05
GP

4 HOUSE OF WAX
12:30, 3:05, 5:40,
8:15, 10:50
R-13

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STAR WARS: EPISODE III GP 12:30,3:30,6:30,9:30	UNLEASHED R13 11:45,1:55,4:05, 6:15,8:25,10:25	MADAGASCAR GP 11:50,1.50,3:50

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4 Unleashed
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3 Under Renovation
4 Under Renovation
5 Star Wars Episode 3
6 House of Wax

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12:15, 2:25, 4:35, 6:45, 9:00
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NOW SHOWING
CINEMA 3 STAR WARS: EPISODE III - GP
12:30, 3:20, 6:10, 9:00
CINEMA 4 HOUSE OF WAX - GP
11:35, 2:10, 4:45, 7:20, 10:00
CINEMA 5 UNLEASHED - R13
11:30, 1:50, 4:10, 6:30, 8:50

TICKET PRICES & SCREENING TIME SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE. FOR CINEMA INQUIRIES, PLEASE CALL: 722 4496.

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1. STAR WARS : EPISODE III
2. MADAGASCAR
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sm megamall cinema 1
HOUSE OF WAX
11:50 FS / 12:20 MF / 2:40 / 5:00 / 7:20
9:10 LFS / 9:40 LMF / 11:30 END
☎ 633-1901

sm cebu cinema
CINEMA 1: KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
CINEMA 3: STAR WARS: EPISODE III
☎ (032) 231-3876

METRO MANILA

sm megamall
1 HOUSE OF WAX
2 UNLEASHED
3 MADAGASCAR
4 BIKINI OPEN
5 AMITYVILLE HORROR
6 STAR WARS : EPISODE III
7 RESERVED
8 RESERVED
9 RESERVED
10 STAR WARS : EPISODE III
11 TRUMPETS
12 LA VISA LOCA

sm city fairview
1 POOHS HEFFALUMP MOVIE
2 IN GOOD COMPANY
3 CAN THIS BE LOVE
4 STAR WARS : EPISODE III
5 UNLEASHED
6 LA VISA LOCA
7 HOUSE OF WAX
8 MADAGASCAR
9 BIKINI OPEN
10 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
11 THE AMITYVILLE HORROR
12 STAR WARS : EPISODE III

sm city north edsa
1 STAR WARS : EPISODE III
2 HOUSE OF WAX
3 RESERVED
4 BIKINI OPEN
5 LA VISA LOCA
6 MADAGASCAR
7 STAR WARS: EPISODE III
8 UNLEASHED

sm city sta. mesa
1 STAR WARS : EPISODE III
2 HOUSE OF WAX
3 UNLEASHED
4 RESERVED
5 RESERVED
6 BIKINI OPEN
7 MADAGASCAR
8 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
9 LA VISA LOCA
10 ANG LAGUSAN

sm city southmall
1 RESERVED
2 RESERVED
3 STAR WARS : EPISODE III
4 UNLEASHED
5 BIKINI OPEN
6 THE AMITYVILLE HORROR
7 STAR WARS : EPISODE III
8 MADAGASCAR
9 HOUSE OF WAX
10 LA VISA LOCA

sm city manila
1 STAR WARS : EPISODE III
2 MADAGASCAR
3 ARE WE THERE YET?
4 STAR WARS : EPISODE III
5 xXx 2 : THE NEXT LEVEL
6 UNLEASHED
7 HOUSE OF WAX
8 THE AMITYVILLE HORROR
9 LA VISA LOCA
10 CAN THIS BE LOVE
11 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
12 BIKINI OPEN

sm cinema tutuban
1 RESERVED
2 RESERVED
3 RESERVED
4 RESERVED

sm supercenter sucat
1 LA VISA LOCA
2 UNLEASHED
3 STAR WARS : EPISODE III
4 HOUSE OF WAX

sm city bicutan
1 STAR WARS : EPISODE III
2 LA VISA LOCA
3 HOUSE OF WAX
4 UNLEASHED

LUZON

sm city pampanga
1 STAR WARS : EPISODE III
2 STAR WARS : EPISODE III
3 AMITYVILLE HORROR
4 BIKINI OPEN
5 MADAGASCAR
6 LA VISA LOCA

sm city baguio
1 STAR WARS : EPISODE III
2 MADAGASCAR
3 LA VISA LOCA
4 ALONE IN THE DARK

sm city batangas
1 MADAGASCAR
2 LA VISA LOCA
3 STAR WARS : EPISODE III
4 THE WEDDING DATE

sm city marilao
1 STAR WARS : EPISODE III
2 LA VISA LOCA
3 MADAGASCAR
4 THE AMITYVILLE HORROR

sm city bacoor
1 AMITYVILLE HORROR
2 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
3 UNLEASHED
4 HOUSE OF WAX
5 STAR WARS : EPISODE III
6 LA VISA LOCA
7 MADAGASCAR
8 BIKINI OPEN

sm city dasmariñas
1 MADAGASCAR
2 LA VISA LOCA
3 IN GOOD COMPANY
4 STAR WARS : EPISODE III

sm city lucena
1 MADAGASCAR
2 STAR WARS : EPISODE III
3 LA VISA LOCA
4 THE WEDDING DATE

VISAYAS AND MINDANAO

sm city cebu
1 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
2 RESERVED
3 STAR WARS : EPISODEIII
4 MADAGASCAR
5 STAR WARS : EPISODEIII
6 BIKINI OPEN
7 LA VISA LOCA
8 UNLEASHED

sm city iloilo
1 BIKINI OPEN
2 RESERVED
3 RING OF THE NIBELUNGS
4 MADAGASCAR
5 LA VISA LOCA
6 STAR WARS : EPISODE III
7 RESERVED
8 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN

sm city davao
1 STAR WARS : EPISODE III
2 MADAGASCAR
3 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
4 STAR WARS : EPISODE III
5 LA VISA LOCA
6 UNLEASHED

sm city cagayan de oro
1 STAR WARS : EPISODE III
2 ALONE IN THE DARK
3 LA VISA LOCA
4 STAR WARS : EPISODE III

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MOVIES/SCHEDULES/PRICES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE

GALLERIA
632-9115/16

1 STAR WARS Episode III • THX 1:00 3:50 6:40 9:30	6 HOUSE OF WAX 10:20 12:40 3:00 5:20 7:40 10:00
2 MADAGASCAR 11:10 1:20 3:30 5:40 7:50 10:00	7 IN GOOD COMPANY 12:00 2:30 5:00 7:30 10:00
3 STAR WARS Episode III 10:40 1:30 4:20 7:10 10:00	8 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN 12:30 3:40 6:50 10:00
4 UNLEASHED 10:20 12:40 3:00 5:20 7:40 10:00	9 BIKINI OPEN 12:20 2:45 5:10 7:35 10:00
5 LA VISA LOCA 12:20 2:45 5:10 7:35 10:00	10 THE AMITYVILLE HORROR 12:40 3:00 5:20 7:40 10:00

ERMITA
536-7809 to 12

1 STAR WARS Episode III	10:30 1:25 4:20 7:10 10:00
2 BIKINI OPEN 10:30 12:50 3:05 5:20 7:35 9:50	5 LA VISA LOCA 10:35 12:50 3:05 5:20 7:35 9:50
3 THE AMITYVILLE HORROR 10:30 12:25 2:20 4:15 6:10 8:05 10:00	6 UNLEASHED 10:55 1:05 3:15 5:25 7:35 9:50
4 HOUSE OF WAX 10:30 12:45 3:00 5:15 7:30 9:50	7 MADAGASCAR 10:30 12:25 2:20 4:15 6:10 8:05 10:00

METRO EAST
682-8193 • 682-8199

1 THE AMITYVILLE HORROR 12.50 2:50 4:50 6:50 9:00	5 UNLEASHED 12:30 3:00 5:30 8:00 10:30
2 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN 11:40 2:40 5:40 9:00	6 HOUSE OF WAX 11:20 1:40 4:00 6:20 8:30 10:30
3 MADAGASCAR 10:50 12:50 2:50 4:50 6:50 9:00	7 STAR WARS Episode III 11:00 1:45 4:30 7:15 10:00
4 BIKINI OPEN 11:10 1:40 4:10 6:40 9:10	8 LA VISA LOCA 12:30 3:00 5:30 8:00 10:30

NOVALICHES
935-3229/31

1 STAR WARS Episode III 11:20 2:20 5:20 8:25	5 STAR WARS Episode III 1:50 4:50 7:50
2 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN 11:20 2:20 5:20 8:25	6 RESERVE
3 LA VISA LOCA 10:20 12:50 3:20 5:50 8:25	7 UNLEASHED 11:00 1:20 3:40 6:00 8:25
4 HOUSE OF WAX 10:15 12:40 3:10 5:45 8:25	8 RESERVE

PIONEER
687-5378

1 STAR WARS Episode III
2 MADAGASCAR
3 LA VISA LOCA
4 UNLEASHED

CITISQUARE MALABON 288-2575

1 LA VISA LOCA
2 UNLEASHED
3 STAR WARS Episode III
4 BOSO

CAINTA 240-4661

1 STAR WARS Episode III
2 LA VISA LOCA
3 HOUSE OF WAX
4 MADAGASCAR

Upclose and Personal
with the cast of
Say That You Love Me

Robinsons Movieworld
ERMITA
June 01 • 4:00 PM
Level 4 Cinema Lobby

Autograph Signing and Picture Taking
Nadine Samonte • Tyron Perez
Cristine Reyes • Benj Pacia
Megan Young

showing at Robinsons Cinemas on JUNE 01

STA. ROSA (049) 837-0907

1 STAR WARS Episode III
2 RING OF THE NIBELUNGS
3 LA VISA LOCA
4 MADAGASCAR
5 BIKINI OPEN

LIPA (043) 757-3664 (043) 312-5870

1 STAR WARS Episode III
2 ONG BAK
3 IN GOOD COMPANY
4 LA VISA LOCA
5 THE WEDDING DATE

DASMARIÑAS (046) 852-2125 (046) 416-4332

1 STAR WARS Episode III
2 IN GOOD COMPANY
3 MADAGASCAR
4 BOSO
5 LA VISA LOCA

ANGELES (045) 892-2348

1 STAR WARS Episode III
2 MADAGASCAR
3 LA VISA LOCA
4 IN GOOD COMPANY

IMUS (046) 875-3838 (046) 471-8188

1 LA VISA LOCA
2 STAR WARS Episode III
3 BIKINI OPEN
4 MADAGASCAR
5 UNLEASHED
6 HOUSE OF WAX

STARMILLS (045) 875-1927 (045) 961-5270

1 HEAD IN THE CLOUDS
2 BIKINI OPEN
3 THE AMITYVILLE HORROR
4 LA VISA LOCA
5 STAR WARS Episode III
6 MADAGASCAR

BACOLOD (034) 441-0453 (034) 441-0459

1 MADAGASCAR
2 STAR WARS Episode III
3 LA VISA LOCA
4 THE WEDDING DATE
5 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
6 GUESS WHO

ILOILO (033) 336-8070

1 STAR WARS Episode III
2 LA VISA LOCA
3 MADAGASCAR
4 RING OF THE NIBELUNGS
5 BIKINI OPEN
6 THE WEDDING DATE

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For marketing and events/reservations please call Marketing Services Department at 687-7945 to 47 locals 14 and 15

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ALABANG TOWN CENTER
AYALA CENTER CEBU
AYALA MALLS **Lovemall!**

and Ayala Malls bring you
TIME to SHINE!
CHAMPIONS LEAGUE of 5
Live in Concert
with special guest
Ms. Anna Fegi

AYALA CENTER	ALABANG TOWN CENTER	AYALA CENTER CEBU
May 21, 2005, 6.00pm Glorietta Park 4 Customer Service Hotline: 752 7272	May 22, 2005, 6.00pm Activity Center Customer Service Hotline: 842 2782, 772 1860	June 4, 2005, 7:00pm Activity Center Customer Service Hotline: (032) 2315342 LOC 324

AYALA MALLS Lovemall!

At the Activity Center

GLORIETTA	ALABANG TOWN CENTER	AYALA CENTER CEBU
Isuzu Car Exhibit May 28-31, 2005	Gold's Fitness Workshop Yogilates (Mon.), Belly Dancing (Tue. & Thu.), Stretch (Wed.) & Stretch Dance (Fri.)	Asian Academy of Music Recital TV Eskwela May 28,2005

AYALA GREENBELT

8th Asian Cartoon Exhibition:
"The Meaning Of Life" by Japan Foundation
May 22 - 31, 2005

GREENBELT 1 Onstage

Repertory Philippines
"SUMMER WORKSHOP SHOWCASE"
May 17, 19, 20, 21, 23, 24, 26, 27, 28
For Inquiries, please call 887-0710

Ayala MUSEUM

Visit the New Ayala Museum located beside Greenbelt 4 along Makati Avenue.
For inquiries, please call 757-7117.

AYALA CINEMAS

Reserve your seats by texting SURESEATS GB3 or SURESEATS G4 to 2333 (Globe) or 211 (Smart) or log on to www.sureseats.com for web reservations.

G1 GLORIETTA 1	1 MADAGASCAR	2 STAR WARS EP. 3	3 HOUSE OF WAX	4 LA VISA LOKA
G4 GLORIETTA 4	1 UNLEASHED	2 STAR WARS EP. 3	3 THX STAR WARS EP. 3 2:30, 5:30, 8:30 GUARANTEED SEATS	
	4 LA VISA LOCA	5 MADAGASCAR	6 STAR WARS EP. 3	7 HOUSE OF WAX
GB1 GREENBELT 1	1 UNLEASHED 1:05, 3:15, 5:25, 7.35,9:45	2 STAR WARS EP. 3 12:30, 3:20, 6:10, 9:00		
GB3 GREENBELT 3	1 THX MADAGASCAR 1:30, 3:30, 5:30, 7:30, 9.30, 11:30 GUARANTEED SEATS	2 THX STAR WARS EP. 3 2:00, 4:50, 7:40, 10:30 GUARANTEED SEATS		
	3 UNLEASHED 2:35, 4:45, 6:55 9.05, 11:15 GUARANTEED SEATS	4 HOUSE OF WAX 12 15, 2 30 4 45, 7 00 9 15 11 30 GUARANTEED SEATS	5 STAR WARS EP. 3 12:10, 3:00, 5.50, 8 40, 11:30 GUARANTEED SEATS	
ATC ALABANG TOWN CENTER	1 THX STAR WARS EP. 3	2 MADAGASCAR		
	3 UNLEASHED	4 HOUSE OF WAX	5 STAR WARS EP. 3	
ACC AYALA CENTER CEBU	1 STAR WARS EP. 3	2 MADAGASCAR	3 UNLEASHED	4 LA VISA LOKA

Experience Spring at Greenbelt

French Spring Festival

June 2	10th French Film Festival Opening (Greenbelt 3 cinema lobby) 7:30pm
June 3 - 15	10th French Film Festival regular run (Greenbelt 1 Artfilm)
June 2 - 19	Pass Off Color Exhibit (Greenbelt 3 cinema lobby)
June 6	Indios Bravos Dance Performance (Greenbelt 1, Onstage) 8:30pm
June 11 & 12	Passage des Embarras Street Theater (Greenbelt 3) 2pm and 8pm
June 13 - 30	The Man Who Planted Trees Art Exhibit (Glorietta Artspace)
June 14	Indoor Circus by Camille Boitel (Greenbelt 1, Onstage) 8:00pm
June 17 - 19	10th French Film Festival regular run (Ayala Center Cebu)
June 18	Fete de la Musique (Greenbelt 3)

AYALA CINEMAS AYALA CENTER

Stargazing at Glorietta

MEET & GREET the stars of *Say That You Love Me*

June 3 (Friday) 5:00 PM
Glorietta Activity Center

Reserved seats for the first 100 moviegoers & FREE picture taking with the stars for the first 30 moviegoers.

Simply present your SAY THAT YOU LOVE ME movie ticket purchased in Ayala Cinemas on June 1 at the promo booth located in the Glorietta activity center.

Customer Service text hotline: 0917 6095900
Customer Service text hotline: Glorietta - 752 7272; from 10am to 8pm
Greenbelt - 752 4853; from 11am to 12mn
Alabang Town Center - 842 2782; from 10am to 8pm
Ayala Center Cebu - (032) 231 5342 loc 324

Movie schedules may change without prior notice. For verification call 729 7777

All-Digital Cinemas

MARKET! MARKET!
The fun is in the finds
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Movies are subject to change without prior notice.
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Free Seating Cinemas: P70.00

① Madagascar
② Kingdom of Heaven
③ House of Wax
④ La Visa Loka

Guaranteed Seats Cinemas: P90.00

⑤ Unleashed
⑥ Madagascar
⑦ Starwars Episode III

EVENTS! EVENTS!

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4 movie passes (Guaranteed Seats Cinemas)
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E-mail: pr_entertainment@inquirer.com.ph
Editor Emmie G. Velarde

ENTERTAINM

Text us your feedback: inquirer ent name/age/city/message to 2207 (Globe) or 283 (Smart)

Shopping with an Angel?

The actress advises Axe promo winner Janssen Bulaclac to go for an iPod and a plasma TV

By Jocelyn Valle

THE CONTROVERSY generated by Angel Locsin's sexy Axe commercial helped create awareness for the deodorant brand's raffle promo.

This was acknowledged by Dondie Gomez, marketing manager of Unilever, maker of Axe, during the promo's culminating bash last Thursday. "But it wasn't our intention," he told INQUIRER Entertainment..

In April, various women's groups, as well as former Sen. Nikki Coseteng, protested the "offensive manner" in which the girls were presented in Axe's "Choose the Girl, Spend Her Money" promo ad. Angel, in particular, was shown taking off her leather jacket in front of a male admirer.

"That commercial was cleared by the Ad Board and we got the support of the MTRCB (Movie and Television Review and Classification Board)," Gomez pointed out. "For anything that is different, you can expect both support and opposition. It all depends on people's interpretation. But if you watch it again, you'll realize that it's actually a funny ad. It's simply about a shopping date with the girl of your dreams. That's not harmful at all."

The public must have shared this insight because Axe posted a double-digit growth from the period the ad was launched in February until the promo formally ended on May 26, said Gomez.

Aside from Angel, four other girls—Ayanna Oliva, Bubbles Paraiso, Raschel Piazza and Paula MacCormac—met their respective dates last Thursday. Each one represents a particular type of woman, explained Gomez. Angel is the movie-TV star, Ayanna the artist, Paula the girl-next-door, Bubbles the athlete and Raschel the model.

The participants in the raffle indicated in their entries the name of the girl they preferred, Gomez added. As expected, majority went for Angel. His "conservative" estimate? At least 30 percent. One winner of the P500,000 shopping money was then drawn from each pool of entries bearing the names of the girls.

Lucky guys Rjay Villas, Philip John Sapilan, James Ryan de Jesus and Alejandro Yumping Jr. instantly bonded with Ayanna, Paula, Bubbles and Raschel, respectively, over Thursday's lunch of pizza and pasta.

Jansenn Glen Bulaclac waited two hours for his shopping date to arrive. As soon as it was announced that Angel was on her way, the 19-year-old electrical communication-engineering student from Cebu City was bombarded with teasing and hooting.

He couldn't hide his excitement when he finally met the "Darna" star. And Angel readily put Jansenn at ease.

She hammed it up for their photos together. She even let him sit beside her during the brief press interview.

Jansenn replied sheepishly in the affirmative when Angel asked if he already had a girlfriend. The actress, on the other hand, was speechless when asked by INQUIRER Entertainment about her rumored romance with Oyo Boy Sotto. "I don't know how to answer that. We're just so happy when we're together," she

SHOPPING/ A2-2

AXE GIRL Angel Locsin JOSEPH AGCAOILI

Winning in these parts

He watched DVDs for 41 hours!

Leslie Javier, a 27-year-old entrepreneur, clocked a staggering 41 hours of continuously watching DVD movies. No naps, no coffee or caffeine sodas, only five-minute restroom breaks.

What was his reward? Nothing less than a Philips DVD player and a 40-inch Philips TV. The feat was for Philips' "Dare To Outlast" challenge.

LESLIE Javier

Javier outlasted four other participants in the marathon recently held at the Eastwood City in Libis, Quezon City: Roy de Veyra, an accounting assistant; Fidel Antonio Robles, an optical shop co-owner and manager; Nancy Pablo Ladores, a system process analyst; and Oliver Vincent Cutamora, a civil engineering supervisor.

According to Angelo Valenton, Philips Consumer Electronics general manager, the five aspirants watched different sets of DVD movies that cut across genres, from action to comedy, musical, suspense and drama. They were served free breakfast, lunch, dinner and snacks while they watched, and had only water and iced tea to drink.

"I'd do it again," said Javier.

Road to Hollywood

Three Star World viewers recently caught the "American Idol" finale—live in Los Angeles, California.

It was two nights of suspense, glamour and idol-gazing for Sheryl Marie Suarez of the Philippines, Felicity Summons of Thailand and Simone Skelchy of Malaysia. They each got two round-trip tickets, accommodations for two and a pair of tickets per night for the AI finale shows.

Suarez, 25, from Noveleta, Cavite, is an employee at the finance department of a multinational manufacturing company. "I still cannot believe I made it to Hollywood with my sister Cherisse and watched Bo and Carrie live!" Suarez said.

That was made possible by Star World's Asia Votes and Trivia Quiz contests, launched in March 16. Aside from the grand prizes, weekly giveaways included a Philips Projection TV, Philips DVD players, Apple iPod Shuffles, American Idol CD albums and limited edition American Idol microphone sets.

Idol
Idol 4
STAR
Sheryl Marie Suarez
MANILA, PHILIPPINES
HOLLYWOOD, CALIFORNIA

SHERYL and Cherisse Suarez

CHEER FACTOR
STAPLES CENTER

BABES Narvasa

One SMS did it

With a single text message, a Globe Handyphone subscriber won a once-in-a-lifetime chance to watch the last Grammy Awards, also in LA.

Ma. Elenita "Babes" Narvasa was listening to the radio in her office one day when she decided to text in the answer to a promo question through her Globe Handyphone. She could hardly believe it when she got a call back saying

WINNING/ A2-2

ETO NA ANG PINAKAHIHINTAY NATIN, MGA KAPUSO!
The ultimate romantic blockbuster movie of the year is back!
Let the Love Begin
IN STORES MAY 31ST
VCD and DVD
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ONLY P425.00
BUY ONLY THE ORIGINAL STOP PIRACY!
GMA FILMS
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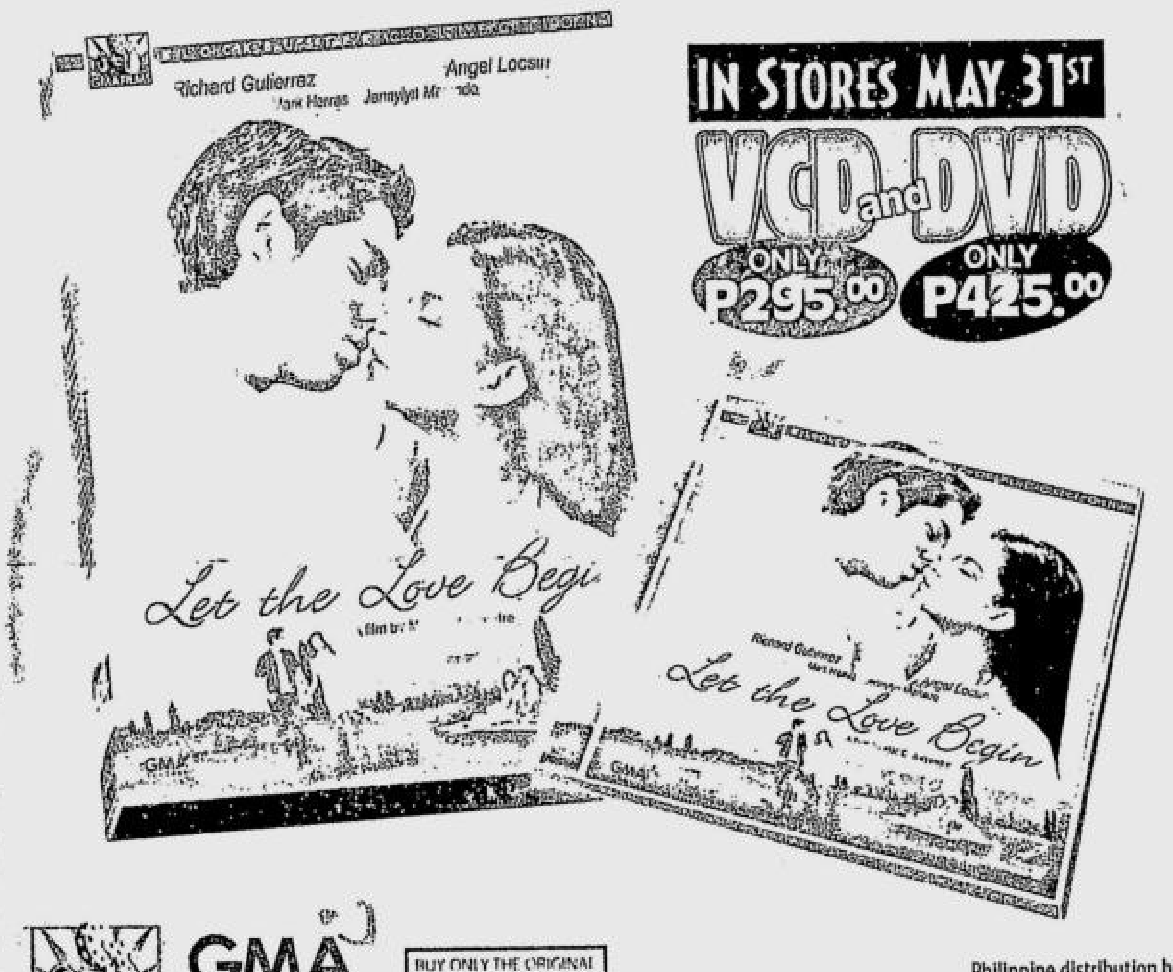
SM odyssey MUSIC & VIDEO RADIO CITY TOWER RECORDS VideoCity



EVER TASTED WATER THIS GOOD?
ENJOY IN 6 SURPRISING FLAVORS
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SUMMIT Clear
SPARKLING WATER BEVERAGE
SUGAR FREE • CAFFEINE FREE
Peach Flavor
Tangerine Lime Flavor
Watermelon Flavor
Black Cherry Flavor

Shopping with an Angel?

From page A2-1

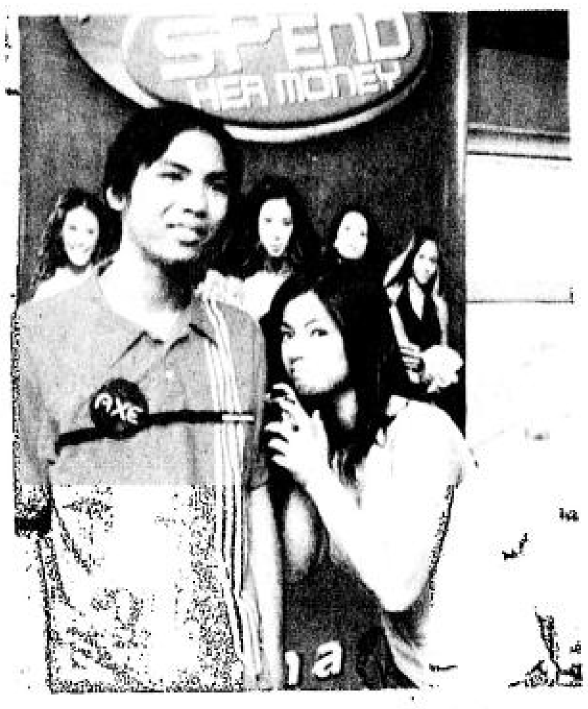
said in Filipino.

Angel admitted though that she's gone out shopping with Oyo.

She has a hard time shopping for a guy, she confessed. "They seem to go for just one style of clothes. I think I'll advise Jansenn to shop for gadgets like an iPod or a plasma TV."

Jansenn, in fact, already has an iPod mini on top of his shopping list, along with the latest mobile phone model. Unilever's Gomez explained to INQUIRER that the winners need not spend all of their half-million takes in one go. "One intends to put his money in the bank and another plans to use it for his education. It's OK with us. It's their money," he said.

Angel's contract with Unilever also officially expired after her shopping date with Jansenn last Thursday, Gomez added. "But it doesn't mean that we're not going to hire her in the future. She's been very kind, helpful, cooperative and humble. She's also very popular now. But, yes, Angel's contract is only for this particular promo."


SPEND HER MONEY

ANGEL'S shopping date Jansenn Glen Bulaclac

JOSEPH AGCAOILI

Winning

From page A2-1

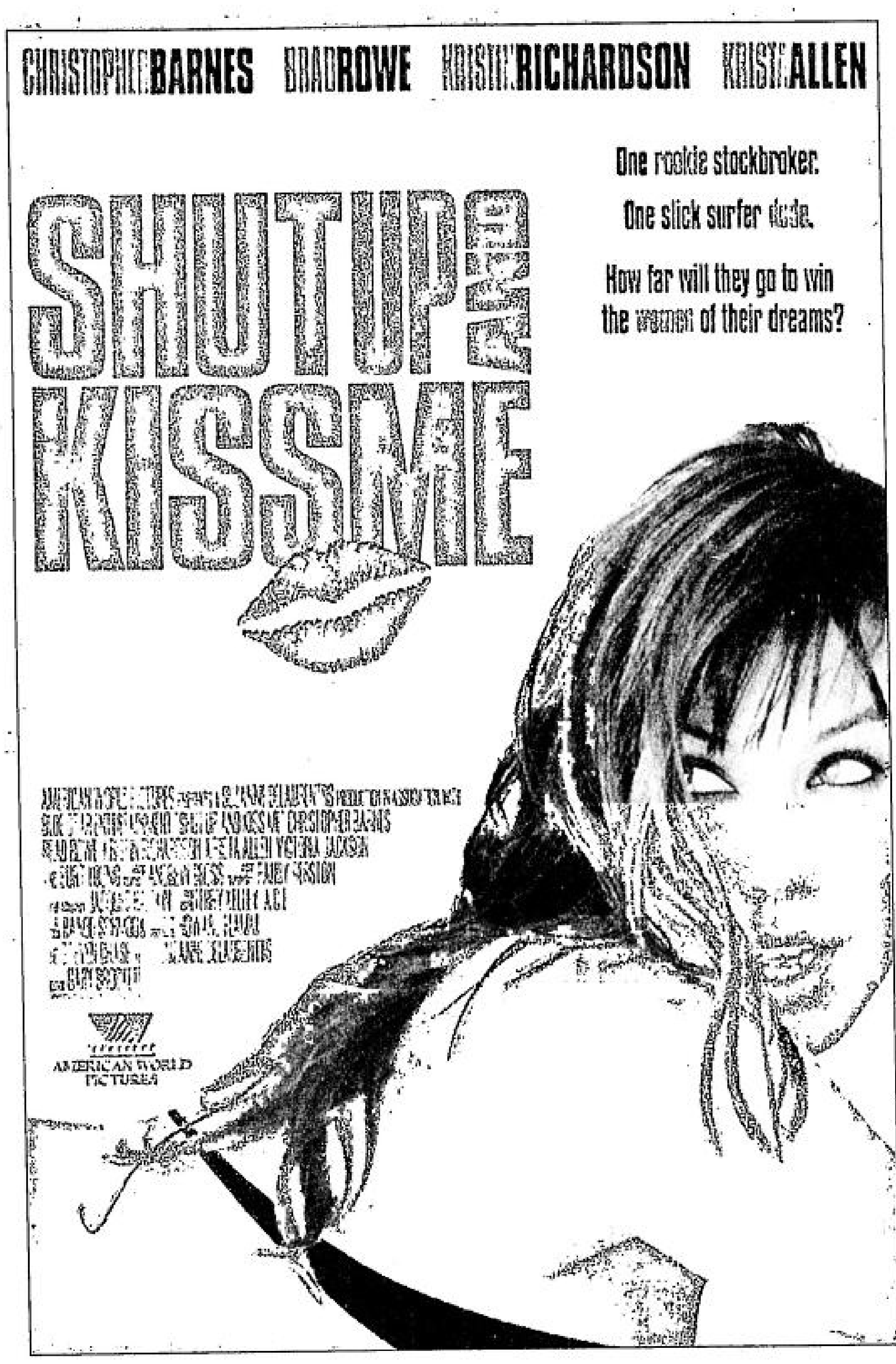
she had won a ticket to the United States to watch the Grammys live.

"I was shocked," said Babes. A young wife and mother who works as a marketing assistant in a bank, she has been a loyal Globe subscriber for more than two years. It was only the second time she joined a text promo.

In LA, after some sightseeing, she sat in during radio interviews with celebrity guests. Over two days, she met the Backstreet Boys, Ludacris, Earth, Wind and Fire, and Kanye West.

The big night finally came, and Babes had a great time watching the ceremonies at the Staples Center. "It was so exciting because it's usually something you see only on TV, and there I was watching it live!" she said. Attendance at the Grammys is normally a privilege extended only to musicians and other celebrities, talent managers and recording company executives.

After Grammys, Babes made the best of her LA experience with a tour of the city sights and nearby Santa Monica beach.


CHRISTOPHER BARNES
BRAD ROWE
KRISTIE RICHARDSON
KRISTE ALLEN
SHUT UP AND KISS ME
One rookie stockbroker.
One slick surfer dude.
How far will they go to win the women of their dreams?
AMERICAN WORLD PICTURES

MTRCB RATING PG-13
Parents are cautioned on the thematic content involving drug use and marital infidelity.
OPENS TOMORROW
THEIR STREET. THEIR GAME. HIS RULES.
SAMUEL L. JACKSON
COACH CARTER
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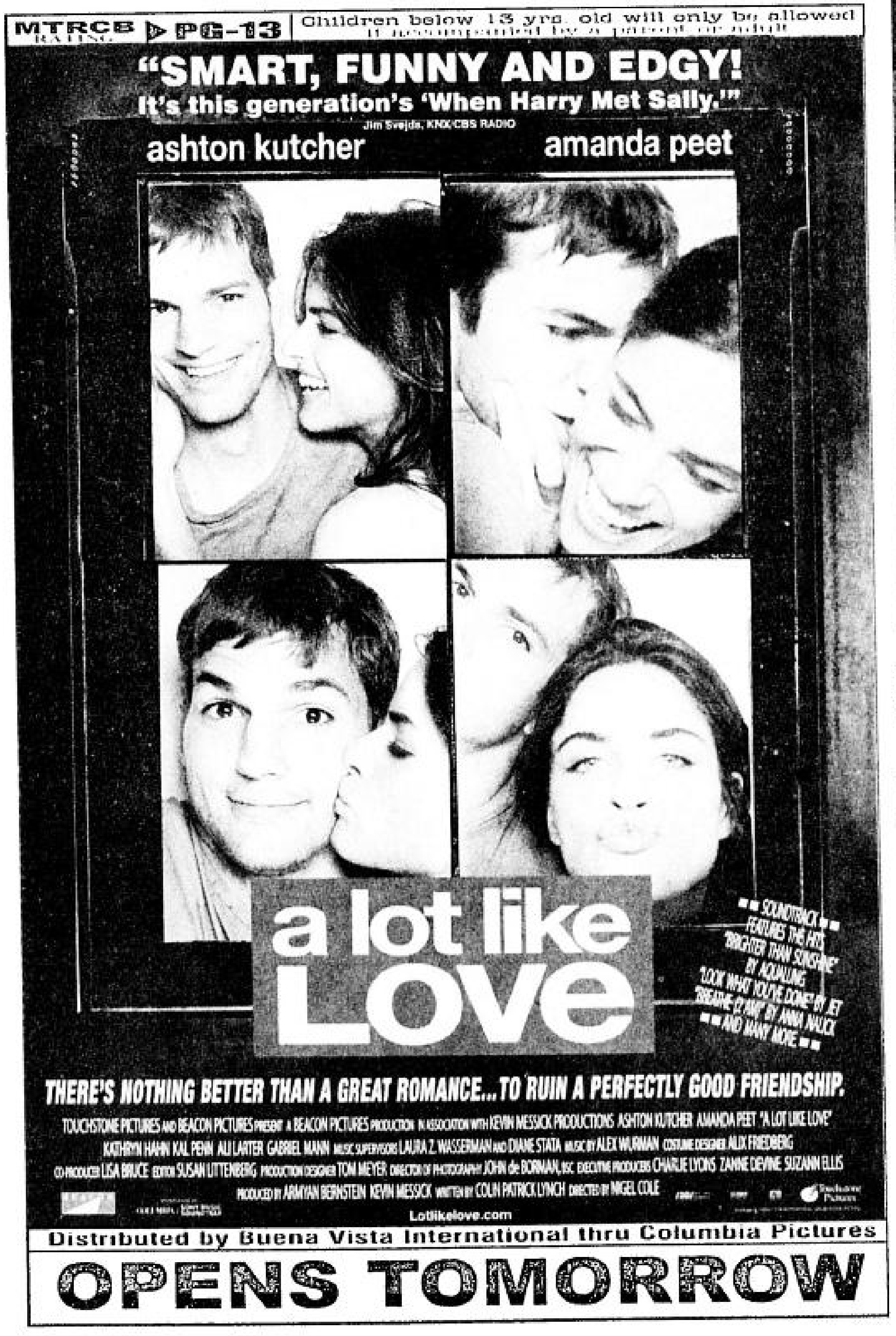
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ELIJAH WOOD is KEVIN
BENICIO DEL TORO is JACKIE BOY

Waiting to exhale

DOLLY WOOD

Dolly Ann Carvajal

I, the self-proclaimed risk-taker, panicked when 'Extra Challenge' invited my son to join its next episode

AS MY fave quote goes (it's printed on my ref magnet to serve as a daily reminder): "If you're not living on the edge, you're occupying too much space. Risk it!"

I have always been one who ventures into uncharted territory. I don't enjoy walking in a straight line. But when a staff member of "Extra Challenge" called up to invite my 17-year-old gay son, IC, a former child actor, to be one of their celebrity challengers, I panicked. The daring free spirit was subdued by the mother in me. IC was bursting with excitement. I was amused to see that he was turning into . . . me! Endless questions ran through my mind. He might be ready and willing but could he withstand all the challenges in the show?

It's S.O.P in "Extra Challenge" not to give out any information about the nature of the tasks, and the location. All they tell you is what kind of clothes to bring, and your call time. I was hoping I could pack myself inside IC's bag so I could watch over him during the taping. I just consoled myself with the thought that after his controversial "coming out" in "The Buzz," the time was ripe for him to take another bold step. Even if he's gay, he's got balls, unlike some men out there.

Weird thoughts

From the moment he left the house at 11 p.m till he came back the following night, I was waiting to exhale, as they say. My fears grew deeper as the night did. I wondered if they took him to some sleazy joint and made him cross dress. Or perhaps they asked him to pose as a roving security guard inside a penitentiary etc... etc... That's how weird my thoughts were. For once, I hated having such a fertile imagination.

It was the longest 24 hours of my life. In all of IC's 17 years I have always known his whereabouts and what he's up to. I guess that night served as a dry run for me for the nights in the distant future when IC won't be coming home to me anymore. It was a test in letting go.

Comfort

I took comfort in the thought that **Aiko Melendez** (who sweetly says she's IC's second mom because she worked with him in "Shake Rattle & Roll 4" and "Dugo ng Panday") was also one of the challengers and she assured me that she'd keep an eye on IC.

And of course I trusted the "Extra Challenge" staff especially their host, **Paolo Bediones**. Plus I have complete faith in my "little boy who has turned into a woman."

I was so relieved when IC barged into the room and exclaimed, "I made it, Mommy!" He even gave me the bouquet of roses he got from the show. It was my reward for enduring the unendurable. I could not hug him enough. I never felt so proud.

Still high

His adrenaline was still running high as he gave me a blow-by-blow account of his "E.C." (nothing easy about it, though) experience. I'd rather not preempt the episode. Just catch it this entire week on GMA 7, 8 p.m.

I used to watch "Extra Challenge" for the vicarious thrills I get from it. Now I know that the family/friends of the challengers go through a major challenge, too. So next time you're glued to "E.C." remind yourself that beyond the excitement in the show, some people had to bear the unbearable agony of waiting for their loved ones to come back home in one piece.

Is this true?

Could it be true that **Nyoy Volante** is falling for soul siren Nina but he's still mustering enough guts to tell her so? They make a wonderful acoustic pair in their gigs. Will their heartbeats beat in harmony, just like their music?

Now that **Willie Revillame** is being accused by two women (writer **Salve Asis** and dancer Eaune) for sexual harassment, other women can just claim and pinpoint Willie as a molester even without prima facie evidence. It's turned into a free-for-all. He may have sowed wild oats during his younger years but now that he's about to marry **Liz Almoro** on June 7 it seems that he has mellowed somehow. No woman in her right mind would tie the knot with someone she knows for sure abuses women. Willie is naturally playful. If you don't know him that well you could misread his signals.

Between love and duty

Responsibility entails countless sacrifices. And for a superhero like Darna, these sacrifices include, among many others, her personal happiness and the liberty to share her life with the man she loves.

If old Darna movies centered on the Pinay superhero's battle against formidable villains, GMA-7's TV serialization includes both her fight against the evil forces and her inner struggles in keeping her relationship with the people she loves. Today's Darna, as portrayed by **Angel Locsin**, epitomizes the weeping heart within an invincible façade of strength.

At such a young age, Darna's alter ego, Narda, bears the tremendous responsibility of saving the world. It was not a task she asked for but a mission bestowed upon her by her own destiny. It's a life-altering secret that separates her from her family; it is an impenetrable wall that keeps her away from Efren (**Dennis Trillo**), the man she truly loves.

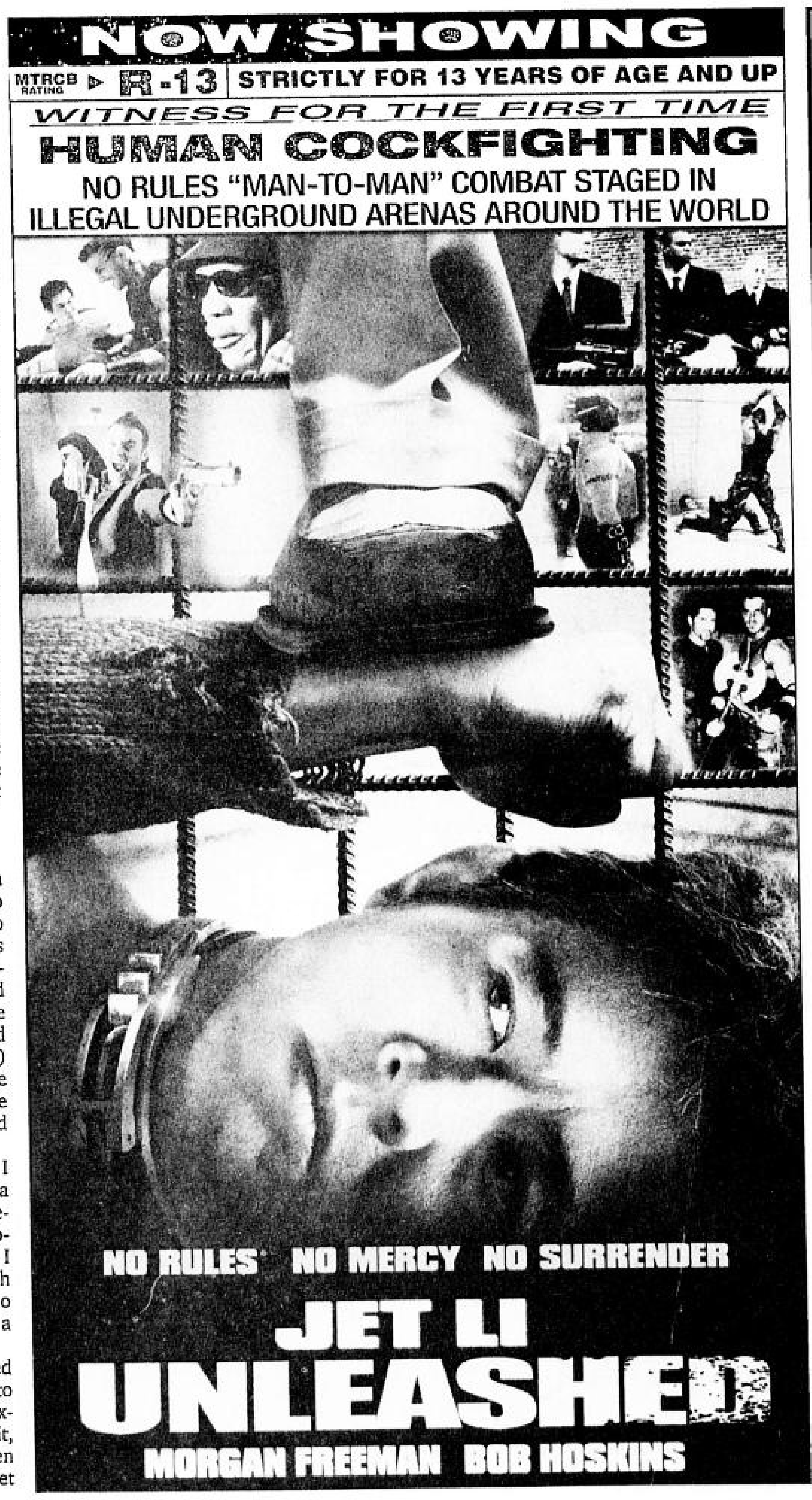
IC: "I made it, mom."

And just when she has had enough of compromising her personal happiness for the world's salvation, Narda is told that she has to continue being Darna lest she endanger the lives of everyone she loves.

This week, Darna is bound to lose two men who are closest to her heart as she faces her greatest nemesis. Will this dishearten her into giving up on her mission to overcome the forces of evil that have been wreaking havoc everywhere? With the loss of the man she loves, will she choose to go on living knowing that her heart can never beat for anyone else again? All this will be happening this week in GMA-7's "Darna," which airs weeknights after "24 Oras."

PERSONAL: Happy Birthday to my coolest cousin **Marti Magsanoc**! We click so well, I sometimes forget I'm older than you. I'll spend eternity thanking you for taking care of my mom, not just because you happened to pass the Board exams the day she was rushed to the ICU, but because you truly, truly loved her.

(For feedback, e-mail wateringholeshangrila@yahoo.com or dollyanne@truefaithband.com)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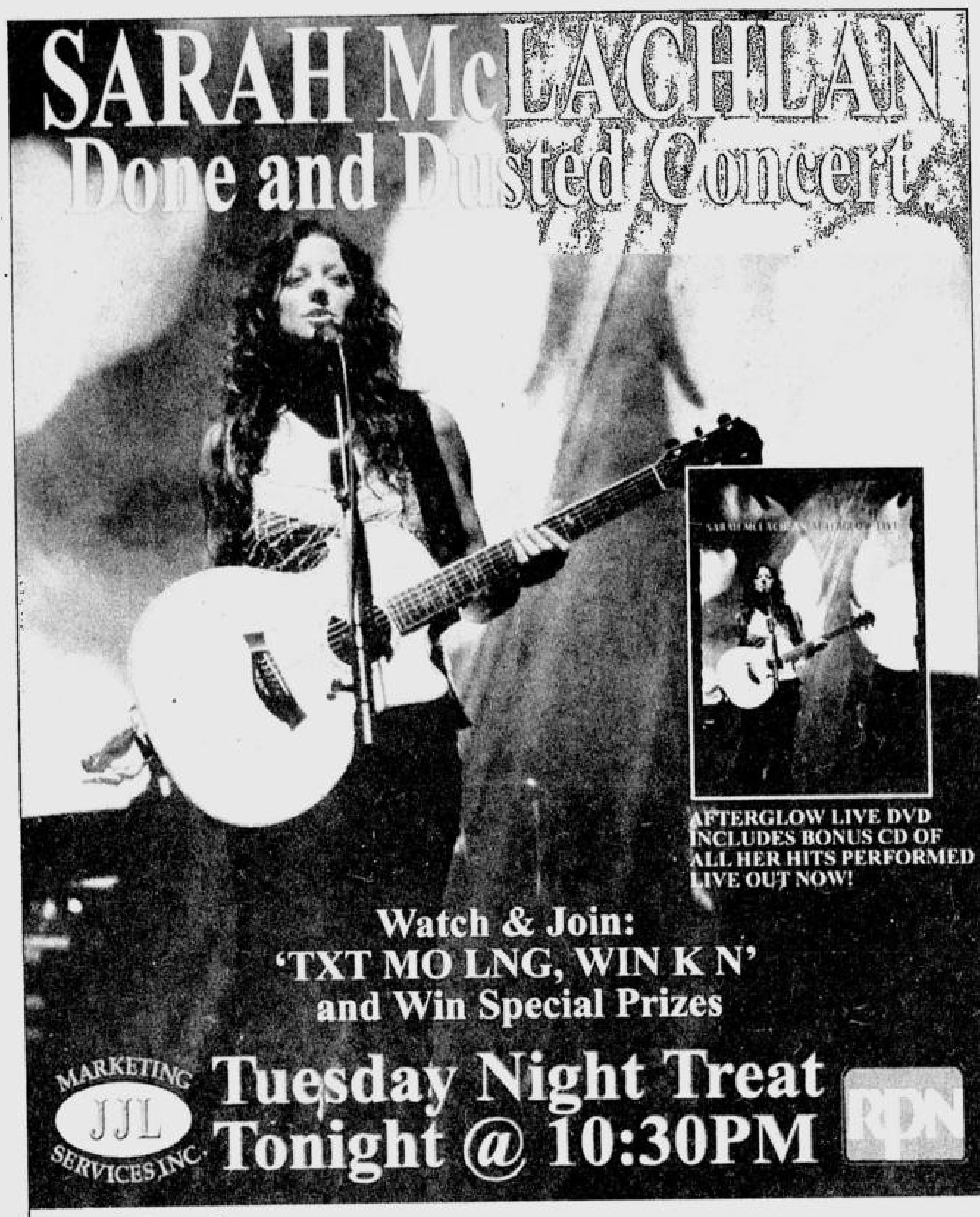
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Cheche and Karen: Self-regulation, not censorship

By Bayani San Diego Jr.

"COMPETITION on television is fierce," said award-winning broadcast journalist Cheche Lazaro. "But beyond competition, there is a higher interest—the public that media serves."

CHECHE Lazaro

KAREN Davila

Lazaro, founding president of Probe Productions, Inc. and host of "The Probe Team Documentaries" on ABC 5, was commenting on the spate of sex-video scandals being aired on television.

Aside from being a respected broadcaster, Lazaro has been a commissioner for Communications in the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (Unesco) National Commission of the Philippines since October 2001.

Serious

Unesco is the latest of the various organizations to express serious concern over scandal TV.

Along with fellow commissioners Vicente Tirol of the Ateneo, Robert "Bob" Garon of the Manila Times and the Nazareth Formation House, and Karen Davila of "TV Patrol" Lazaro attended the recent consultative forum presided by Unesco national commission chair Dr. Florangel Braid and held at the Asian Institute of Journalism and Communication.

Lazaro said other concerned sectors were invited to the forum, including the Professional Artist Managers, Inc. (Pami) which initiated the campaign against "unethical entertainment journalism" on television.

She enumerated: "From the advertising field, Yoly Ong (of Campaigns and Gray) and JJ Calero (of Zenith Optimedia). Fr. James Reuter represented the Catholic Church. There were also representatives from academe, media and NGOs, like Beth Diaz of the Concerned Women of the Philippines and Alice Villadolid, formerly of the Philippine Press Institute."

"Unesco is supporting [Pami's] move," Lazaro told INQUIRER Entertainment, "because it believes in the power of media to influence and alter behavior, and effect change in society."

In a nutshell, Lazaro said the meeting was held to clarify what the Unesco "can do to help."

"What can we do to improve media?" Lazaro specified. "Upgrading the levels of competence is very important."

Davila, who was appointed as Unesco commissioner last year, agreed. "Among themselves, people in the entertainment industry should set standards and parameters for all the networks."

"Our system on television is self-regulation," Lazaro confirmed.

Self-regulation is preferred to censorship, a tool of the martial-law dictatorship, she emphasized.

Last week, the Movie and Television Review and Classification Board was put to task for issuing memorandum circular No. 07-05 which, lawmakers and journalists believe, would effectively muzzle media.

The circular requires prior state approval of public affairs programs on television.

If self-regulation works on hard news, Lazaro and Davila saw no reason why it couldn't work on so-called light entertainment fare.

In the news business, Davila remarked, broadcast journalists came up with a Media Nation seminar, where the stakeholders got together to thresh out issues and institute standards.

"Perhaps the entertainment industry should come up with its own Media Nation," Davila said.

Guide

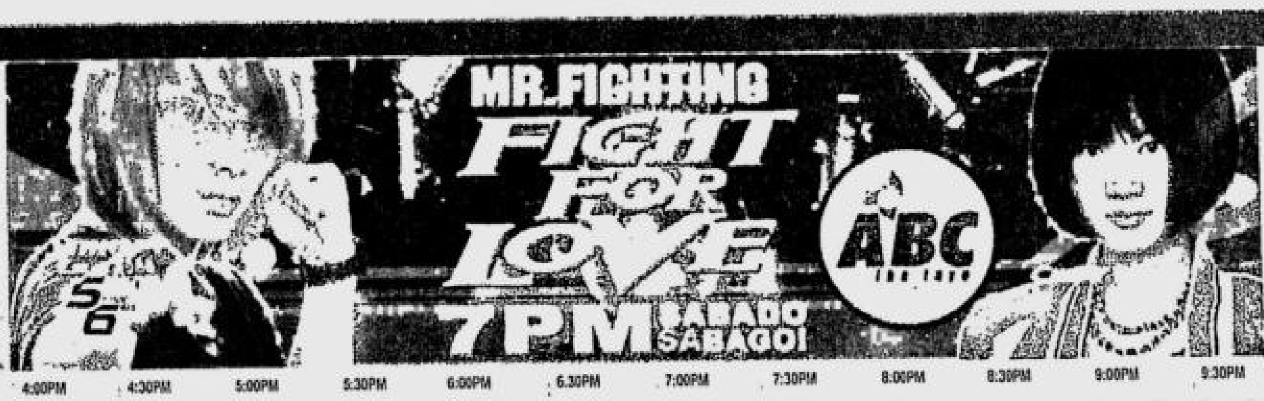
Lazaro owned up: "We've been repeatedly told that the bottom line for media is revenues—how much the [media outfits] earn. Which is quite understandable because it is a business. You have to pay salaries. You have to compete in the market."

But in a landscape where competition is cutthroat, what could guide the average media practitioner?

"There is always the temptation," Lazaro acknowledged. "There's a fork in the road and you have to choose."

The buck stops with individual conscience, Davila reiterated "because you are in the industry for something larger than yourself."

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
TV GUIDE
Tuesday, May 31, 2005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Channel	2:30PM	3:00PM	3:30PM	4:00PM	4:30PM	5:00PM	5:30PM	6:00PM	6:30PM	7:00PM	7:30PM	8:00PM	8:30PM	9:00PM	9:30PM	10:00PM	10:30PM	11:00PM	11:30PM
ABS-CBN 2	Kapamilya Cinema				Showbiz No. 1 (4:25 PM)	Yu-Gi-Oh! (5:10 PM)	Meteor Garden Full Edition		TV Patrol World		Mga Anghel Na Walang Langit	Hiram	Ikaw Ang Lahat Sa Akin	Memories Of Bali	Stained Glass	Bora			Insider
ABC 5			Problema Nyo, Sagot Ko	EZ Shop	Anime Ring Kassho				Sentro	Lizzie Mcguire	Three Blind Dates		Wow Mali		Big News	The Probe Team Documentaries		Billboard On-Air	
GMA 7	Saang Sulok Ng Langit	Now and Forever	Glass Shoes	One Piece	Flame Of Recca	Full House		24 Oras		Darna		Encantadia	Extra Challenge		All About Eve	Bahay Mo Ba 'To?			Saksi
RPN 9		Metro TV Shopping	Defenders Of The Earth	Hey Arnold!	As Told By Ginger	Wild Thornberries	Sponge Bob	The Insider	Tough Enough	7 Days		Medium		Cold Case		Newswatch Now	Tuesday Night Treat		
IBC 13		Lifestyle		EZ Shop		Home Shopping Network	IBC Express Balita	Pangarap Kong Jackpot		Shakey's V-League		Asian X-Tour					IBC News Tonite	Up Close And Personal	
JackTV	Just For Laughs	Just For Laughs	Hip Hop Nation	WWE Bottomline		WWE Afterburn		X-Play	Banzai	Mad TV		Trigger Happy TV	Primetime Glick	South Park	The Daily Show With Jon Stewart	Stripperella	Family Guy	Wee Hoti	
Nickelodeon	Blues Clues	Rugrats	The Fairly Odd Parents	SpongeBob SquarePants	All That	Are You Afraid of the Dark?	100 Deeds of Eddie McDowd	The Amanda Show	The Adventures Of Jimmy Neutron	Fairly Odd Parents	SpongeBob SquarePants	As Told By Ginger	Yakkity Yak	Chalkzone	Rocket Power	Hey Arnold!	The Wild Thornberrys	The Angry Beavers	Rugrats
MYX		Urban MYX	MYX Backtrax	Pop MYX	OPM MYX	Take 5	My MYX	MYX Daily Top Ten		Mellow MYX	Rock MYX	Pop MYX	Urban MYX	Top Of The Pops	MYX Remakes	My MYX	MYX Backtrax	OPM MYX	Mellow MYX
ETC		Good Morning Miami	Knock First	Blind Date	Fifth Wheel	Elimidate	Change of Heart	Seinfeld	Ambush Makeover	JKX	Simple Life	One Tree Hill		Who Wants To Marry My Dad 2		Entertainment Tonight	The Insider	The Tonight Show With Jay Leno	
Cinema One		Volta				Maruja				Desperado				Bakit Ba Ganyan? Ewan Ko Nga Ba Darling?				Strebel Gestapo Ng Maynila	
Studio 23				PBL Game 2				Ragnarok	Project Arms	Wazzup Wazzup	Angel			Smallville		News Central	Oprah		The Men's Room
AXN		CSI: Miami (Season II)		CSI: Miami (Season II)		Gensomaden Saiyuki	Gensomaden Saiyuki	Pensacola (Season II)		Boomtown		Ripley's Believe It or Not		CSI: NY (Season I)		The Amazing Race 7			
Star World	Frasier	The Bold & The Beautiful		Hollywood Squares	Home Improvement	Buffy The Vampire Slayer		The Simpsons	The Drew Carey Show	Star News Asia	Friends	Charmed		Wild Card/Miss USA 2005/Criss Angel Supernatural Mindfreak		Miss Match		Friends	Charmed
CNN				Business International		Larry King Live		World News	World Sport	Business International		World News Asia		World News	World Sport	World News Asia		World News	World Sport
National Geographic		Air Crash Investigation		Seconds From Disaster		Interpol Investigates		Egypt Detectives: Mystery Of The First Egyptians	Africa From The Ground Up	Wow		About Asia		National Geographic Specials		Air Crash Investigation		Seconds From Disaster	
Solar Sports		WTA '05 Pacific Life Open Indian Wells USA					Boxing: J. Chavez vs. I. Robinson						Sports Desk	NBA Western Conf. Finals Game3					NBA Action
Lifestyle Network	Secret Gardens	The Fix	Mission Organization	Carol Duvall	Molto Mario	Hot Off The Grill	Good Eats	Extreme Cuisine	Unwrapped	Passion For Dessert	Second Look		Look For Less	Life & Style		Clean House		Road & Track	Back To Basics
HBO		A Mighty Wind (3:10 PM)			Cowboy Bebop The Movie				Subterano (6:45 PM)				Tango & Cash (8:20 PM)			Six Feet Under 50 Bomb Shelter		Freddy vs. Jason (10:50PM)	
Star Movies	Lord Of The Flies			The Assignment			Rocketman (5:45 PM)				Nemesis Game (7:25 PM)			The Jackal				Snowman's Pass (11:05PM)	
Cartoon Network	Scooby-Doo Show	The All New Popeye Show		Tom & Jerry Show	The Woody Woodpecker Show	Ed, Edd N Eddy	Codename: Kids Next Door	X-Men Evolution	Static Shock	Gundam Wing	Shaman King	The Looney Tunes Show		The Powerpuff Girls	Dexter's Laboratory	Time Squad	Thundercats	He-Man & The Masters Of The Universe	Gundam Seed
ESPN						Soccer FIFA Fever											Soccer FIFA Fever	2004 Semi-tasonal Table Tennis C'ships	
Disney Channel	Mr Bean The Animated Series	Totally Spies	The Sleepover Club	Art Attack/Untalkative Bunny	Buzz Lightyear Star Command	Martin Mystery	Totally Spies	Kim Possible	Mr Bean The Animated Series	House Of Mouse	Wonderful World Of Disney			My Wife And Kids	That's So Raven	America's Funniest Home Video	According To Jim	Wonderful World Of Disney	
Cinemax		The Last Hurrah (3:15 PM)					Babylon 5: A Call To Arms			Forever Young (7:15 PM)				Snakehead Terror			Dreamcatcher		
Hallmark Channel	Who's The Boss	Just Cause		HCA: The Fairytaler	Sesame Street		Mad About You	Who's The Boss	Bewitched	Five Days To Midnight		Just Cause		Scar Tissue			Missing (10:35PM)		Five Days To Midnight
Discovery Channel		Civilizations				Wild Science		Ultimate Discovery		Rides		Human Discovery		Wild Discovery		Ultimate Discovery		Science Mysteries	
Sports Plus				Italia Serie A				French Open '05 Day9 Cfinal											

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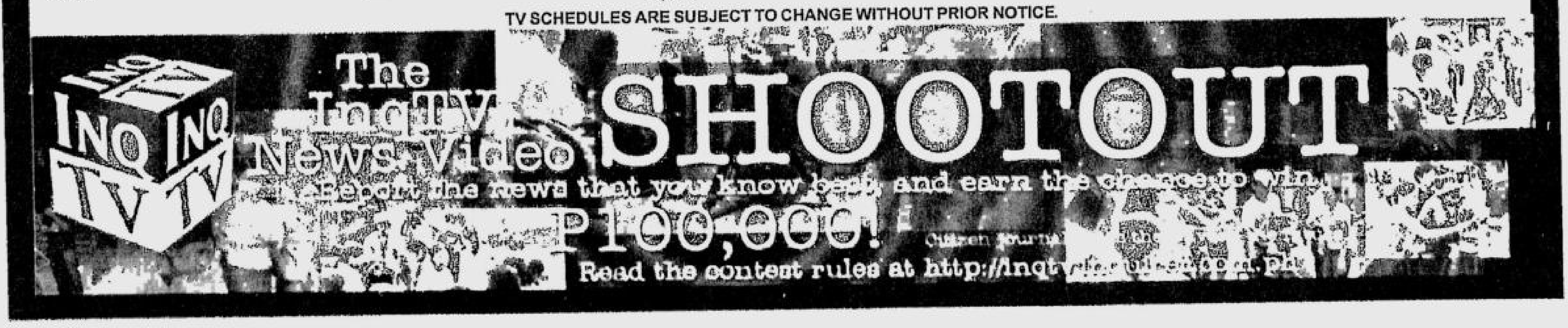
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T-bill rates continue downtrend

WHAT'S INSIDE

Gov't to expand power rate discount coverage
/B3

MR. BEARBULL

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British gov't sees RP economy growing
/B5

Sun earmarks $200M for 2006 expansion
/B2

91-day rate eases to 5.767%

By Michelle V. Remo

TREASURY bill rates continued to decline across all maturities yesterday as officials said the improved outlook by Fitch Ratings on the Philippines boosted market confidence in the country's fiscal standing.

"With that (improved market confidence) and the high level of liquidity in the market, there is really no way to go for interest rates but down," National Treasurer Omar Cruz said in a briefing after yesterday's auction.

The benchmark 91-day treasury bill rate, which banks use in pricing their loans, slid further to 5.767 percent after falling below the 6-percent mark last week to 5.92 percent.

The three-month debt paper was highly oversubscribed as tenders reached P7.52 billion compared with the government's debt offering of only P2 billion for each maturity.

The rate for the 182-day bills fell by 14.9 basis points to 6.817 percent. Bids for the six-month government security was also high at P7.38 billion. The 364-day treasury bills fetched a rate of 7.934 percent, or 5.1 basis points lower than the previous week's. (One percentage point is equivalent to 100 basis points.)

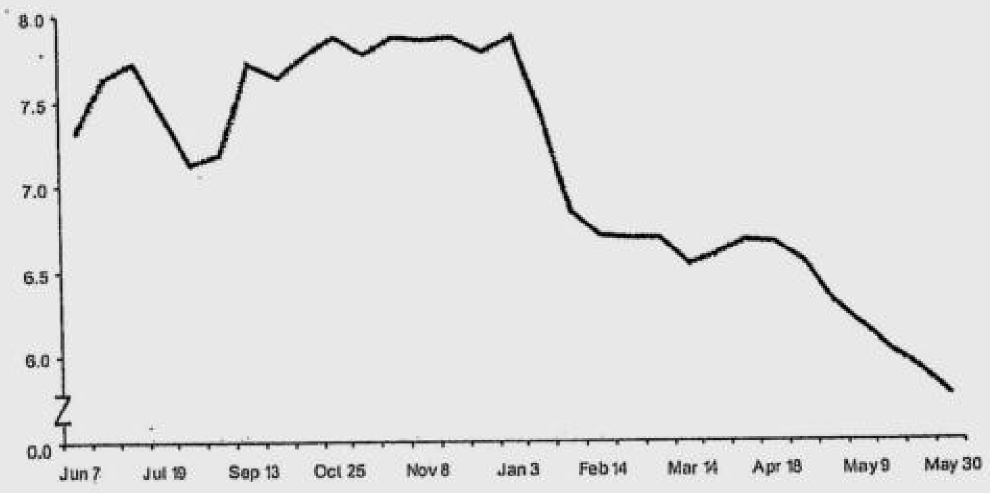
Last week, credit-rating firm Fitch Ratings announced that it adjusted its outlook on the Philippines' long-term foreign and local currency ratings from "negative" to "stable." The ratings agency cited the developments on the country's fiscal front, such as the passage of the value-added tax bill, which is the Arroyo administration's key measure to help trim the government's looming budget deficit.

A stable outlook means the country can possibly get a credit-rating upgrade within the short term.

The VAT bill, which lifted the exemptions of several products and services, is estimated to yield P28.75 billion in additional revenues in the remaining part of the year, and as much as P105 billion annually starting next year. The bill also raised the corporate income tax rate from 32 to 35 percent, and gave President Macapagal-Arroyo a standby au-

91-DAY/ B4

91-day Treasury Bill rates
(June 7, 2004 to May 23, 2005)



Inflation seen at 8.1-8.6%

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE BANGKO Sentral ng Pilipinas yesterday said the country's annual inflation rate likely averaged between 8.1 and 8.6 percent in May, not far from the 8.5 percent in April.

For the full year, the inter-agency Development Budget Coordination Committee expects inflation rate to average at 7.8 percent, even higher than the BSP's latest internal forecast of 6.8-7 percent.

Government economic managers have long conceded that this year's inflation, which measures the rate of increase in the prices of basic goods and services, would overshoot the official target of 5-6 percent.

The BSP did not expect a significant uptick in consumer prices for the month of May compared to the previous month.

"Lower oil prices in May likely tempered overall price increases and kept inflation close to the April number," said BSP Officer-in-Charge Amando Tetangco Jr.

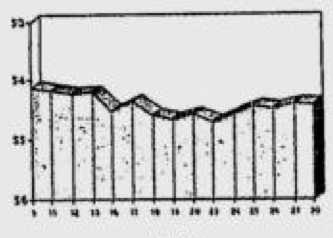
The BSP expects oil prices to remain high in the foreseeable future but its own inflation forecasts for the full year do not include other factors like the transport fare adjustment, the impact of a 2-percentage increase in the value-added tax, and another increase in the

INFLATION/ B4

INDICATORS

CURRENCIES

PESO-DOLLAR RATE



P54.415= $1
As of 5 p.m., May 30, 2005

¥107.92= $1
As of 5 p.m., May 30, 2005

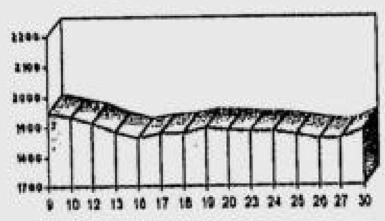
GOLD: $418.30-418.80
per ounce Hong Kong, May 27, 2005

May 30, 2005 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	0.794849376	1.000000	54.4340
Japan	Yen	0.007363	0.009264	0.5043
United Kingdom	Pound	1.450362	1.824700	99.3257
Hongkong	Dollar	0.102209	0.128589	6.9996
Switzerland	Franc	0.646009	0.812744	44.2409
Canada	Dollar	0.634155	0.797830	43.4291
Singapore	Dollar	0.479027	0.602664	32.8054
Australia	Dollar	0.606246	0.762718	41.5178
Bahrain	Dinar*	2.108466	2.652661	144.3949
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.21196	0.266667	14.5158
Brunei	Dollar	0.477588	0.600853	32.7068
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000083	0.000105	0.0057
Thailand	Baht	0.019694	0.024777	1.3487
UAE	Dirham	0.216421	0.272279	14.8212
Euro	Euro	1	1.258100	68.4834
Argentina	Peso	0.27575	0.346921	18.8843
Brazil	REAL	0.331879	0.417537	22.7282
Denmark	Kroner	0.134361	0.169039	9.2015
India	Rupee	0.018273	0.022989	1.2514
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.209182	0.263172	14.3255
Mexico	New Peso	0.073086	0.091950	5.0052
New Zealand	Dollar	0.567425	0.713878	38.8592
Norway	Kroner	0.125343	0.157694	8.5839
Pakistan	Rupee	0.013467	0.016943	0.9223
South Africa	Rand	0.121222	0.152509	8.3017
Korea	Won	0.000795	0.001000	0.0544
Sweden	Kroner	0.108789	0.136868	7.4503
Syria	Pound	0.015312	0.019264	1.0486
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.025403	0.031959	1.7397
Venezuela	Bolivar	0.00037	0.000466	0.0254

STOCK MARKET

Stocks rise on bargain-hunting

PSE COMPOSITE INDEX



(See stock market report on Page B4)

SHARE prices closed 0.60 percent higher yesterday as investors chased bargains for a second consecutive session despite lower than expected economic growth in the three months to March, dealers said.

They said market players were not too surprised with the first-quarter gross domestic product (GDP) data, which reflected the impact of high oil prices, sluggish exports and weaker farm output.

The Philippine Stock Exchange composite index added 11.2 points to close at 1,886.61 having traded between 1,873.22 and 1,888.53.

Volume reached 383.8 million shares worth P526.2 million.

Gainers outnumbered losers 40 to 17, with 45 stocks ending unchanged.

The broader all-shares index gained 7.45 points to 1,152.66.

The government yesterday reported GDP grew at a slower pace of 4.6 percent in the first quarter compared to 5.4 percent in the fourth quarter of 2004, with poor agriculture output weighing on the economy. (See story on page___)

"Investors have long discounted that economic growth would soften in the first quarter and was not really a factor in today's trade. Today's movement was more a continuation of (Friday's) technical recovery," Accord Capital Equities analyst Ron Rodrigo said.

"Chart-wise, there were buying signals at (the market's current) level."

"We are going through some period of consolidation, with a slight upward bias. The market is trying to build a strong base (within which to anchor a rally)," said Gomer Tan, an analyst at Regina Capital Development Corp.

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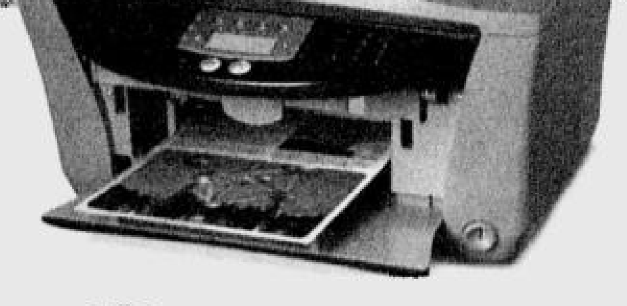

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Sun earmarks $200M for 2006 expansion

By Clarissa S. Batino

THE GOKONGWEI-OWNED Digital Telecommunications Philippines Inc. is earmarking another $200 million for the expansion of Sun Cellular's network infrastructure next year.

This will enable the phone company to accommodate up to 10 million subscribers by the end of 2006, a company official said.

Digitel is currently implementing a $200-million expansion project that will bring to 2,000 its total cell sites this year.

The company aims to increase its subscriber base this year to 3 million from the current level of 1.7 million.

With the heavy investments in its infrastructure, the company is not expecting to post profit until 2008.

"We are investing $200 million this year and another $200 million next year for our wireless business. We want to build a strong network for our text and call unlimited plan under 24/7," said James Go, vice chair of Digitel.

He said this year's expansion would allow the network to service about 6 million customers.

Go told shareholders during Digitel's annual general meeting yesterday that the company would also use a combination of internal funds and borrowings to finance the expansion program in 2006.

Charles Lim, head of Digitel's mobile services said Sun Cellular would be "cash positive" by the middle of next year in terms of earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation and amortization or ebitda.

"The cellular company should start posting profits by 2008," said Lim.

Digitel posted a net loss of P451 million in the first quarter.

Go denied that Digitel was losing money because of the 24/7 plan.

"On the contrary, our finances have been improving since we launched our popular and cost effective plan."

The Gokongwei wireless brand will continue with its 24/7 unlimited text and call deal within the network, he said.

"To us, 24/7 is still the best value proposition and we want to give more people the opportunity to come in, especially as we expand the network capacity to about 3 million by July," said Lim.

Digitel senior vice president William Pamintuan said Sun Cellular would come up with new promos that would give subscribers better value.

Before 24/7 was launched in October, Sun Cellular had only 700,000 customers. Its subscriber base has more than doubled since then.

"We are reviewing different variations. We want to address all segments of the market," said Pamintuan.

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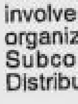

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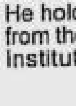
Dr. Morato championed the establishment of AIM's Asian Center for Entrepreneurship and the Center for Development Management. He was the Dean of AIM (2000-2002) and Dean of the AIM W. SyCip Graduate School,of Business (2002-2004). As a consultant and trainor for multinationals and large local companies, he was involved in the development of distributors and their organizations. Currently, he is teaching courses on Subcontracting, Outsourcing, Franchising and Distribution at AIM.



PROF. ELI P. SANTOS, Ph.D.
Prof. Santos is an expert in management, strategic leadership and planning, and organizational Improvement. A member of the core faculty of the AIM W. SyCip Graduate School of Business, he is also the co-founder and president of Foremost CPG Brands Corporation. Prior to this, he was the president and CEO of Marsman and Co., president of Macondray Distribution Co. He holds a doctorate in Organizational Development from the Southeast Asia Interdisciplinary Development Institute and an MBA from De La Salle University.

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Conrado R. Banal III

I HAVE bad news and good news. And I also happen to have the "winning combination" in yesterday's jueteng.

I am not kidding. I actually received a SMS, meaning, a cellular phone "text" message, which contained nothing but two numbers.

Every malicious newsman would have supposed that the numbers were the jueteng draw results somewhere. Me, I did not believe any of it.

For how could I? I know fully well that the PNP, under this cute administration of Gloriaetta, has succeeded where nobody ever did under all the previous administration in the history of this country, and they already wiped out jueteng all over the country.

(Whoever you are, stop sending me those messages. I already stopped betting, okay. Until after the Senate hearings, okay!)

* * *

THE BAD news is that the new airport terminal at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport, the Naia 3, will not start operations next month, as promised.

I mean, its start of operations, silly. Six months ago, Gloriaetta said that the new terminal would open next month. This was what she promised us.

No, definitely, she did not promise us that the airport would NOT open. Well, it has been in a state of NON-opening for a long time now.

And so in a casual encounter, Finance Secretary Cesar Purisima told me that the Japanase contractor for the terminal, a group called Takenaka, was giving us a hard time.

Apparently, Takenaka would not play ball with this cute administration. For the longest time, it did not want to give us the specs —the technical design.

And the Manila International Airport Authority needed the design to finish the airport, because a lot still has to be done, something like $100 million worth more.

Anyway, Purisima said that, definitely, the new terminal will be opened but, unfortunately, it is not going to be next month, as promised.

Oh well, what's another broken promise?

* * *

BUT I also have wonderful news for those of you who are disappointed about the new airport terminal.

And that is, somebody is building a first class hotel near the new terminal. Yes, it is located at the same area, somewhere near the Villamor Air Base.

Such is a "text" message I want to receive—not jueteng results from only the PNP knows where. I am not even in a position to publish the winning numbers, okay!

Anyway, some of you may be disappointed to know that not everything is going wrong in our country. The truth is, some sectors of the economy are going great.

Partly thanks to the betting operation on NBA games, for instance, which is done via "text," the telecoms sector is posting record earnings.

There is also the ITC sector, where you have the "call centers," and the software piracy business, este, no, not that, I mean, the fledgling software programming business. This thing called San Miguel, a Filipino company, is also now the biggest— again, THE biggest—food and beverage company in the whole of Southeast Asia.

And between us girls, real estate—believe it or not—is picking up. Really, there is still a lot of money to be made out there. That's why somebody is building that airport hotel.

* * *

THAT somebody is named Andrew Tan, founder of the Megaworld group, the most prolific developer of condos in the country today, delivering some 5,000 units every year, for the past several years.

What is it they say again, that when the going gets tough, the tough gets going? Oil prices may be hitting the skies, and with such an increase comes a chain reaction of high inflation rate and wage increases and unrest—all the things bad for business.

And so you hear and feel a lot gloom and doom scenarios these days.

But still, this country has millions of OFWs, who are sending home roughly $10 billion every year, which means more than P500 billion in spending power.

Take it from Andrew Tan. Years ago, actually, he already saw the buying power of those OFWs, particularly the high-income groups such as the nurses and the engineers, and even the officer-level seamen.

Megaworld was ahead of everybody in going abroad straight to those OFWs to market its housing units there. The company did it starting in 1998, or as soon as the domestic real estate market felt the crunch from the Asian financial crisis of 1997.

* * *

THIS time, hopefully, the recovery in real estate sector will have none of the idiocy during the boom of the 1990s. In the sector these days, you hear a lot about "sustainability."

I think the banks have a lot more to do with that hifalutin word than any sector. In real estate financing, the banks are backing up the right people. Finally.

Today, unlike during the boom in the 1990s, banks are aggressive in lending to the end users of condo units, such as young couples in the so-called "in-law factor."

Well, nobody wants to stay with the "in-laws," right, and so for as long as there are "in-laws" in this world, there will be a need for new housing units.

The banks are lending to such people - the buyers! This was not the case in the 1990s. At that time, the banks were stupid enough to lend to the developers.

I can still remember fondly the stupid banks that lent something like P5 billion to a guy who put the money in land. Well, idle loan, of course! You know what—the guy never really developed anything in his life. He was actually a maker of electric fans.

Today, nevertheless, the banks are going for the end users. Believe me, they will do everything and anything to pay for the mortgage.

To begin with, a housing loan requires about 20 to 30 percent equity from the buyer. If you don't pay for the mortgage, you forfeit the equity.

And surely, nobody wants to lose the roof over his head. The whole family suffers. Worst of all, you have to stay with the "in-laws."

* * *

A FEW other developers are busy putting up condos in Metro manila, such as Ayala Land, Robinson's Land, and the George Ty group of Metrobank.

I guess more and more people are now willing to live in condos, as the high rise lifestyle gains acceptability in this country. It is actually the only way to go. What with our population still rising at about 2.4 percent every year!

And the incentive for buying housing unit is, of course, the high inflation rate and the expectation of a higher inflation rate.

Look, if you put money in the bank, you earn interest of about 4 to 5 percent a year. In effect, you lose out to inflation. It is going at more than 6 percent a year.

On top of it all, the banks are dying to give out housing loans, not only offering low interest rates on them, but also using come-ons like free cellular phones and raffles. (But not jueteng draws, okay!)

***

ANYWAY, I sought out Andrew Tan of Megaworld, because from what I gathered, his company is offering the most affordable units in the market today.

Is that his secret for being the most prolific of the superstar developers of today?

Really, Megaworld prices its condo units much lower than most of the other developers. Andrew Tan tells me that, to do that, the company sacrifices profits. Really? How come Megaworld posted record profits last year. Well, according to Andrew Tan, the company went for volume.

That's actually the Divisoria style, meaning, less margin but higher profit due to bigger volume. It's the typical Chinese-Filipino way of selling.

That's why Megaworld delivers something like 5,000 units a year.

I am reminded of the story of SM and Rustan's, as both department stores started in the 1970s, with Rustan's catering to the upper class and SM going for the masses (i.e. volume). Guess who has become the giant today.

* * *

BUT back to that hotel near the new airport terminal, I heard that Megaworld is building the hotel but it is talking to a number of international hotel chains for a tie-up.

Megaworld also owns the Hyatt Hotel in Ermita, which is operated by the international hotel chain. Apparently, Andrew Tan wants a similar arrangement for the new hotel at the airport.

After all, it is said that the next big thing in real estate is the leisure and resorts sector. Maybe that's why Shangri-la is doing a project in Boracay, and Ayala just bought a whole stretch of beach in Bataan, plus a prime seaside area at the Subic Free Port.

Lifetime seeks reversal of SEC revocation order

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

LIFETIME Plans Inc., a subsidiary of Pacific Plans Inc. (PPI), asked the Securities and Exchange Commission to reverse a decision dissolving the company.

In a petition filed with the SEC on Friday, Lifetime Plans said the SEC had committed "grave abuse of discretion and a reversible error" when it issued an order revoking Lifetime's certificate of incorporation.

SEC Commission Secretary Gerard Lukban, confirming the receipt of the petition, said the commission *en banc* has yet to meet and discuss Lifetime's petition.

Lifetime claimed the order was issued in a manner "grossly abhorrent to its well-enshrined principle of due process." It claimed the order was issued without the benefit of a required notice and hearings as provided for by the SEC's own rules and guidelines.

Lifetime also claimed that the order had failed to sufficiently state and discuss the reasons for the revocation of the certificate of incorporation.

The pre-need firm said that assuming it did not sufficiently comply with the SEC's requirements, it should not be used as a basis to revoke the company's incorporation certificate.

Lifetime claimed the SEC did not ask the company to show cause why its certificate of incorporation should not be revoked. "Neither was a hearing set to give Lifetime an opportunity to be heard," it added.

"It is respectfully submitted that the issuance of a resolution , one as grave and far-reaching as canceling the corporate existence of Lifetime or any corporation for that matter cannot be done clandestinely by way of a mere executive session," Lifetime said.

Lifetime also said the SEC's claim that its documents were insufficient had no basis and wa inaccurate.

Insular Life income up 28%

INSULAR Life has reported a record consolidated net income in 2004 of P1.06 billion, up by 28 percent from the previous year's P828 million.

The increase was due largely to a sustained high premium production and a 26-percent rise in interest income from government bonds, money market placements, loans, dividends from equity investments and trading gains, reaching P2.8 billion.

Also contributing to the increase in net income were significant savings brought about by the streamlining of operations and cost efficiency initiatives.

Consolidated revenue reached P10.4 billion, slightly higher than year-ago level. Premium income reached P7.3 billion. Consolidated assets amounted to P41.4 billion, up by 10 percent from the previous year's figure. Members' equity also increased by 10 percent to P6.0 billion. Total benefits paid to life and non-life policyholders amounted to P3.9 billion. Dividends paid to individual life insurance policyholders amounted to P885 million.

In his report to policyholders, Insular Life chair and CEO Vicente R. Ayllon said the company banked on a proven mix of operational efficiency, product innovation, responsive delivery of services, and sound investment strategy to strengthen its stability and financial performance.

Prices to remain stable–Santos

By Abigail L. Ho

THE DEPARTMENT of Trade and Industry has assured the public that commodity prices will remain stable despite the enactment into law of the expanded value-added tax measure.

In a briefing yesterday, Trade Secretary Juan Santos said prices of basic commodities would only go up if President Macapagal-Arroyo would decide to use her standby power to raise the VAT rate from 10 percent to 12 percent.

Under the expanded VAT law, however, the President can use her standby power only if the VAT collection exceeds 2.8 percent of the previous year's gross domestic product or if the national government deficit goes beyond 1.5 percent of GDP.

Santos also said most of the commodities covered by the extended VAT law were already being slapped a 10-percent VAT now.

Price increases, he said, would most likely occur "when other components come into the picture, which will already be outside the VAT."

The actual impact of the VAT law on commodity prices would depend on certain production components, such as fuel and labor, he said.

The new law withdrew the VAT exemption of petroleum products. This means that prices of commodities with fuel accounting for a big chunk of the production cost would likely go up.

For cement, for example, Santos said the VAT impact would be more pronounced because energy expenses accounted for about 32-50 percent of production cost.

For milk, on the other hand, he said the impact would not be as much since fuel expenses accounted for only 2 percent of the production costs.

The Department of Agriculture also said prices of pork, chicken, vegetables, fish, rice and corn would be hardly affected by the new VAT law.

While giving assurance of price stability, Santos said the DTI, DA and Department of Energy were closely coordinating with each other to ensure that there would be no abuse of the new VAT law and that commodity supply would be enough.

Gov't to expand power rate discount coverage

By Michelle V. Remo

THE GOVERNMENT is looking at expanding the coverage of the "lifeline rates" on electricity to include more households, in a bid to cushion the impact of rising prices and the implementation of the expanded value-added tax on consumers.

A government official said the Department of Energy was considering raising the electricity consumption threshold eligible for rate discounts to 150 kilowatt-hours from 100 kWh.

Under the Electric Power Industry Reform Act (Epira), those consuming 71 to 100 kWh of electricity are entitled to a 20-percent discount, those consuming 51 to 70 kWh enjoy a 35-percent discount, while those consuming 50 kWh or less get a 50-percent discount.

The source said that aside from possibly raising the threshold for the lifeline rates, the DOE is also looking at the reduction of the tariff on fuel from 5 percent to 3 percent.

President Macapagal-Arroyo recently signed into law the expanded value-added tax measure, which imposed VAT on products and services that were previously exempted from the tax, including electricity and oil, and services rendered by lawyers and doctors.

The law also raised the corporate income tax rate from 32 to 35 percent, and granted the President a standby authority to raise the VAT rate from 10 to 12 percent next year.

The Department of Finance said the law on the expanded VAT was the Arroyo administration's main revenue-raising measure to combat the government's fiscal problem. The DOF estimated that the expanded VAT would raise P28.75 billion in the remaining part of the year, and as much as P105 billion annually starting next year.

BCDA plans to tap new John Hay operator

THE BASES Conversion and Development Authority said it was not planning to run Camp John Hay on its own.

Instead, the BCDA said in a statement that it would look for a new developer to operate the facility should it decide to take over the former military base.

The statement was made to address the concern aired by Baguio City Representative Mauricio Domogan that the facility "would be better managed by the private sector."

"We support Congressman Domogan's view that the government should not be involved in property development and management. This is why a new private operator will be selected to run Camp John Hay," the BCDA said.

BCDA subsidiary John Hay Management Corp. spokesperson Lyssa Pagano-Calde said "it appears inevitable that a new private operator may have to come in since there seems to be no solution in sight to the huge debt problem facing the current private operator."

"A number of potential operators with world-class capabilities and experience in operating similar tourism facilities have already expressed interest in handling the operations of Camp John Hay," Pagano-Calde said.

Several local and foreign investors have signified their serious interest in operating John Hay.

The Fil-Estate group-backed Camp John Hay Development Corp. (CJHDevco) bagged the lease agreement to operate the facility but has incurred some P2.2 billion in arrears, of which P1.2 billion is due and demandable.

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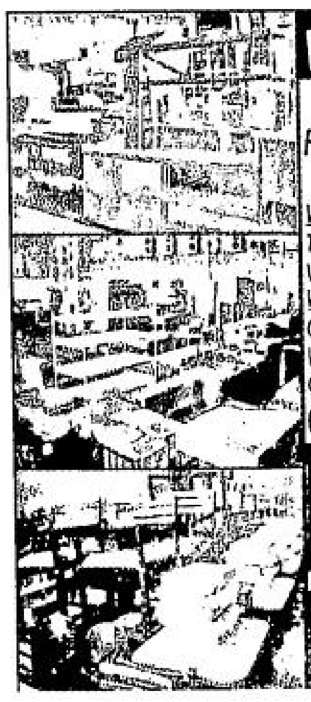
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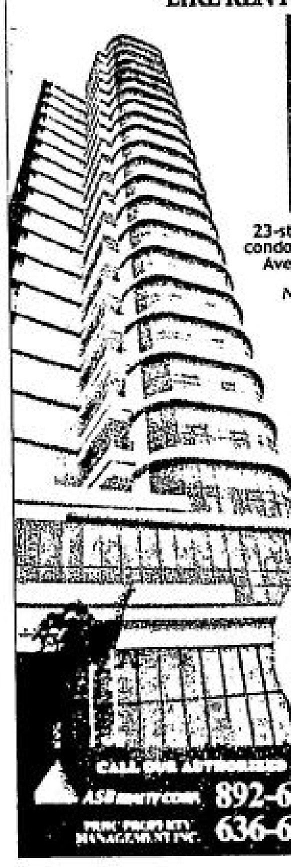

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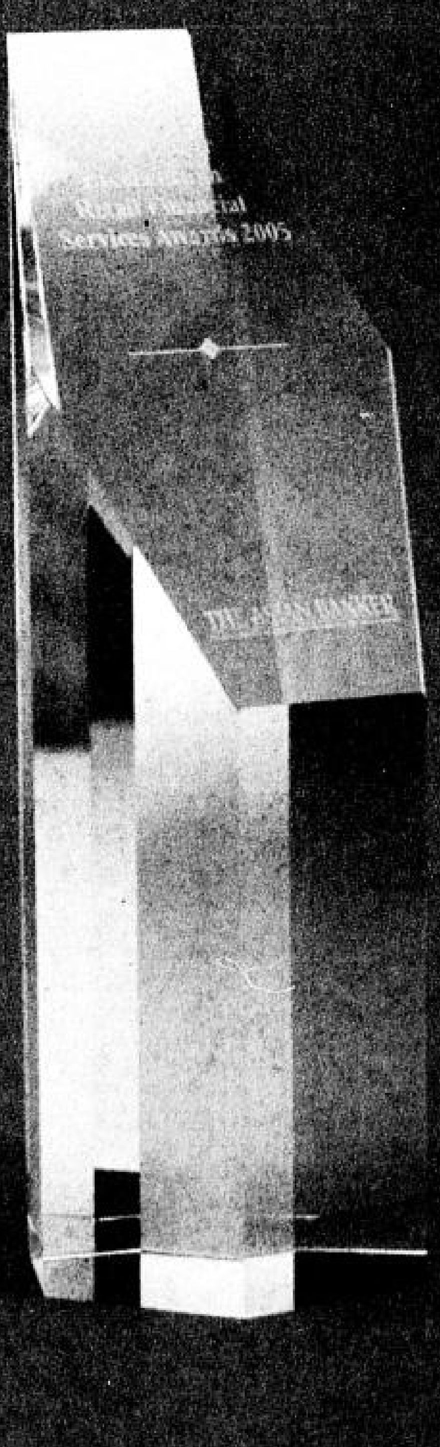

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MR. BEARBULL

Ron Nathan

I COULD not write yesterday because first of all I was watching the thrilling 9-ball pool match between Pagulayan and Bustamante. It was a race to 15 and the score was 14 all. The tension was unbearable and my blood pressure overtook the DOW. Then I switched over to watch the Miss America competition and just my luck, I found myself watching the swimsuit competition. After 20 minutes, I was suffering from hypertension, asthma and inflation. My doctor has given me an ultimatum. From now on, I can only watch Discovery Channel and Cartoon Network. I thought the competition was limited to single women. How did Mrs. IPPI get in?

The FDA is looking into complaints that VIAGRA can cause blindness. Apparently, the drug takes the blood away from the brain and nearby organs, including the eye, and transfers it to where it is needed most. One of my friends took it. He started out optimistic; he ended with a misty optic.

I missed the first 5 episodes of Star Wars so I doubt that I will understand Revenge of the Sixth.

President Bush is not the most intelligent President that the United States has ever had but last week, he surpassed himself. Condoleeza Rice told him that America could not depend forever on imported oil. America needed solar energy. Immediately, the President asked Congress for $100 billion to send 400,000 troops to secure the sun.

I like to read the English newspapers from time to time. Here are some extracts from serious newspapers:

Commenting on a complaint from Mr. Arthur Purley about a large gas bill, a spokesperson for the Gas Company said, "We agree it was rather high for the time of year. It is possible that you have been charged for the large amount of gas used up during the explosion that destroyed your house."

Irish police are being handicapped in a search for a stolen van because they cannot issue a description. It is a Special Branch vehicle and they don't want the public to know what it looks like.

At the height of a gale, the harbormaster radioed a coastguard on the spot and asked him to estimate the wind speed. He replied that he was sorry but did not have a gauge. However, if it was any help, the wind had just blown his Land Rover off the cliff.

* * *

What can I say about the stock market other that it remains comatose from its toes upward. Net turnover, which excludes cross sales, is a miserable P446,000. Converted into dollars, turnover must be near its 8-year low. On Thursday, when American Idol was on, Filipinos sat idle and the computer ticker tape moved in slow motion, just like Channel 5 on Skycable.

The market has so little momentum that it is pointless trying to trade. Today, only two stocks traded over P50 million, SM and BPI. The rise in the PHISIX was largely due to a P30 gain in TEL. I think the market will continue to creep up in low turnover while the Senate discusses the future of "jueteng" and the Supreme Court the constitutional validity of the VAT bill.

In the meantime, FITCH has upgraded our debt from negative to stable but our bonds remain 4 levels below junk so we still have a long way to go. The President estimates that the bill will produce P75 billion but economists say that the figure is only P28 billion. Bear Stearns, an American investment house, estimates that it will produce only P20 billion, better than nothing but quite inadequate. Anyway, the market has responded sluggishly and most investors are sitting on the sidelines.

FIL-HISPANO held its annual general meeting last Friday but I was unable to attend as I am married to the daily newsletter. President ENDAYA announced that since 2003, the number of seats had increased from 700 to 2800, a compound growth rate of 140 percent. Profits for the first quarter had more than tripled from a year ago, from P14.2 million to P51.4 million. Based on what is already booked this year, he forecast a profit of around P270 million, up from P119.5 million last year.

This is well below my expectation of P330 million but I was able to clarify the situation with another director. The profit forecast does not take into account further orders confidently expected in the next 7 months nor does it include expansion of existing orders. The company is now diversifying its activities so as to maximize its use of space, used mostly at night. They are looking at acquisitions in the medical and transcription outsourcing businesses and are also tapping opportunities in China, India, Malaysia, Singapore and Europe where they can take advantage of the varying time differences. This adds extra profit because the call centers can be used during the day and the only expense is the agent's salary.

I am sticking to my forecast and will update readers as each quarter's profit is announced. These should increase incrementally as the number of seats increase. In early July, there will be a rights issue of 1 for 2 at only P1, almost a stock dividend, and stockholders must take it up, otherwise they will lose out. The purpose of the rights issue is not to raise money but to improve liquidity, which leaves much to be desired. I have not made any allowances for the use of the P300 million that will be raised.

The call center industry is expected to grow by 30 percent for the next five years and according to my calculations, this means an increase of 271 percent. The call center industry is still in the early throes of expansion just like the telecom sector was three years ago when I recommended TEL at P226. FH remains my favorite stock and over the next year, I expect the price to appreciate by 50 percent, allowing for the adjustment to the rights issue.

The company is changing its name to PRAXYS, which sounds like a cure for rheumatism. My own suggestion, CALL GIRLS INC. was flatly rejected. I can't imagine why.

Central Luzon is paying COLA P20 a day. Well, COCA and PEPSI also pay COLA. *mrbearbull@hotmail.com*

Inflation seen at 8.1-8.6%

From page B1

rates of National Power Corp.

On the demand side, the BSP's latest forecast of 6.8-7 percent has yet to factor in the impact of possible wage adjustments.

The DBCC, on the other hand, has factored in even the impact of the new VAT reform law on top of higher oil prices and power rates as well as fare hike increases.

The DBCC simulations, presented by Economic Planning Secretary Romulo Neri to a bicameral congressional hearing on the state of the Philippine economy, showed that the lifting of certain exemptions from the 10-percent VAT this year would push the inflation rate up by an additional 1.4-1.5 percentage points.

He said the adjustments approved by the Energy Regulatory Commission on Napocor generation rates would result in an additional 0.149 percentage point rise in inflation.

Meanwhile, the fare increases for jeepney and bus operators approved by the Land Transportation Franchise Regulatory Board were estimated to increase inflation by 0.6 percentage point.

Higher transport fares are also seen to have a cascading impact on food prices as well as demand for higher wages by the labor sector.

The DBCC assumes that Dubai crude will average at $45.35 a barrel this year, much higher than its earlier forecast of $32.96. As such, the higher-than-expected oil prices would jack up inflation rate by 1.26 percentage points, Neri said.

For the first time in nearly five years, the Monetary Board raised its key overnight rates by 25 basis points in Apil to ward off further inflationary pressures from skyrocketing global oil prices. The overnight borrowing or reverse repurchase rate was increased to 7 percent and the overnight lending or repurchase rate to 9.25 percent as a "preemptive move."

The BSP believes that inflation is likely to decelerate in the near term, moving toward the targeted 4-5 percent range in 2006 in the absence of further adverse shocks. However, the BSP also recognizes the risks arising from high oil prices, impending second-round effects in the form of nominal wage increases and ancillary adjustments in other key prices such as transport fares and power costs.

DISCLOSURES

ELECTED directors of **Fil-Hispano Holdings Corp.** were Tarciso M. Medalla, Roger Leo A. Cariño, Christopher B. Maldia, Victor M. Endaya, Lim Ghee Keong, Manuel R. Lozano, Roberto A. Atendido, Raul M. Leopando and George Y. Sycip

***

ELECTED directors of **Semirara Mining Corp.** were David M. Consunji, Isidro A. Consunji, Victor A. Consunji, Cesar A. Buenaventura, Jorge A. Consunji, Herbert M. Consunji, George San Pedro, Arthur N. Aguilar and Rafael M. Lotilla. Victor C. Macalincag and Federico E. Puno are elected as independent directors.

***

BANCO de Oro Universal Bank disclosed that Jose T. Sio is the re-appointed adviser to the board of directors. Elected officers were Nestor V. Tan as president, Pedro M. Florescio III as treasurer, Antonio C. Pacis as corporate secretary and Luis S. Reyes Jr. as assistant corporate secretary.

***

ELECTED directors of **Basic Consolidated Inc.** were Oscar C. de Venecia, Sergio M. Locsin, Oscar L. de Venecia Jr., Ramon L. Mapa, Francis Chua, Isidoro O. Tan, Prudencio C. Somera Jr., Rufino Antonio Mijares, Roberto S. Malonzo, Omelita J. Tiangco and Prasan Sirinnont.

***

INTERNATIONAL Container Terminal Services Inc. disclosed that a news report published in the May 28 issue of The Manila Times (internet edition) is based on an interview of an International Finance Corp. official. The company did not receive an official announcement that the port project had been won over. ***Compiled by Erika A. Sarmiento, PDI Research***

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of May 30, 2005)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
BANKS					
Banco de Oro Univ. Bank	29	30	29	29.5	1,272,300
Bank of the Phil. Islands	47.5	48.5	47.5	48.5	2,378,700
China Banking Corp.	780	780	780	780	120
Citystate Savings Bank	17.5	17.5	17.5	17.5	300
Export and Ind. Bank Inc.	0.6	0.62	0.6	0.62	5,100,000
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	49	50.5	49	50	120,100
International Exch. Bank	18.75	18.75	18.75	18.75	21,500
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	30.5	30.5	30	30	354,500
Philippine National Bank	33	33	33	33	26,000
Phil. Savings Bank	34	34	34	34	1,800
Security Bank Corp.	29.5	29.5	29.5	29.5	1,300
Union Bank of the Phil.	27.5	27.5	27.5	27.5	44,000
FINANCIAL SERVICES					
Filipino Fund Inc.	3.4	3.4	3.4	3.4	30,000
Manulife Financial Corp.	2420	2430	2420	2420	590
PCI Leasing & Fin. Inc.	1.02	1.02	1.02	1.02	310,000
Sun Life Financial Inc.	1710	1710	1685	1685	1,150
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	12.25	12.25	11.75	11.75	45,400
Digital Telecom Phils Inc.	1.04	1.04	1.04	1.04	2,092,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	825	825	825	825	240
Ipeople Inc.	3.4	3.4	3.4	3.4	10,000
ISM Communications Corp.	0.05	0.05	0.05	0.05	500,000
Pilipino Tel. Corp.	3.15	3.2	3.15	3.2	451,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	1455	1480	1455	1470	22,220
Ivantage Corp.	0.69	0.69	0.69	0.69	150,000
Philweb Corp.	0.017	0.018	0.017	0.018	21,100,000
POWER, ENERGY & OTHER UTILITIES					
Manila Electric Co. A	15.75	15.75	15.5	15.5	14,500
Manila Electric Co. B	22.75	22.75	22	22.25	173,200
Manila Water Co. Inc.	6.1	6.1	6.1	6.1	4,501,000
Petron Corp.	3.2	3.3	3.2	3.25	471,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Aboitiz Trans. Sys. Corp.	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.4	2,000
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	7.5	7.6	7.5	7.5	210,000
Keppel Phils. Marine Inc.	0.59	0.59	0.59	0.59	210,000
CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS					
Holcim Philippines Inc.	3.05	3.2	3.05	3.2	779,000
Republic Glass Hldg. Corp.	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.7	100,000
Supercity Rlty Dev. Corp.	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	2,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Alaska Milk Corp.	3.2	3.2	3.2	3.2	128,000
Ginebra San Miguel Inc.	32	32	31	31	3,400
Jollibee Foods Corp.	29.5	29.5	29.5	29.5	86,100
Pancake House Inc.	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	50,000
Swift Food Inc.	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	70,000
San Miguel Corp. A	58	58.5	57.5	58	133,800
San Miguel Corp. B	84	86	84	86	326,400
Vitarich Corp.	0.27	0.27	0.27	0.27	100,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Abacus Con Res & Hdg A	0.0075	0.008	0.0075	0.008	4,000,000
Ayala Corp.	330	340	330	335	18,390
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	4.85	4.9	4.85	4.9	59,000
A. Soriano Corp.	1.94	1.96	1.94	1.96	65,000
APC Group Inc.	0.29	0.29	0.29	0.29	530,000
Bacnotan Cons Indus Inc.	11.5	11.5	11.5	11.5	3,000
Boulevard Holdings Inc.	0.15	0.15	0.15	0.15	500,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	0.95	0.95	0.94	0.94	950,000
Basic Consolidated Inc.	0.17	0.17	0.17	0.17	130,000
Southeast Asian Cement	0.3	0.31	0.3	0.3	3,340,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	2.44	2.55	2.44	2.48	1,731,000
Fil-Hispano Holdings Corp.	8	8	7.9	7.9	161,000
First Phil Hldgs Corp.	44.5	45	44.5	45	179,900
Forum Pacific Inc.	0.16	0.16	0.16	0.16	100,000
Global Equities Inc.	0.08	0.08	0.08	0.08	1,600,000
Ionics Inc.	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.3	2,000
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc.	3.2	3.2	3.2	3.2	30,000
Megaworld Corp.	1.36	1.38	1.36	1.38	5,129,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.35	0.37	0.35	0.37	10,710,000
Roxas Holdings Inc.	0.93	0.93	0.93	0.93	20,000
Solid Group Inc.	0.45	0.45	0.45	0.45	50,000
SM Investments Corp.	248	250	248	250	597,960
South China Resources Inc.	0.62	0.62	0.62	0.62	20,000
Uniwide Holdings Inc.	0.17	0.18	0.17	0.18	7,700,000
Waterfront Phils. Inc.	0.21	0.21	0.21	0.21	300,000
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
Music Semiconductors Corp.	1.18	1.18	1.18	1.18	3,000
Picop Resources Inc.	0.09	0.09	0.09	0.09	1,500,000
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHERS					
Belle Corp.	1.12	1.14	1.12	1.14	6,410,000
Leisure & Resorts Corp.	1.24	1.28	1.24	1.26	4,765,000
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp. (PDR)	12	12	11.5	11.5	104,700
OTHERS					
Far Eastern University	480	480	480	480	350
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	7.6	7.6	7.6	7.6	2,078,000
Cebu Holdings Inc.	0.9	0.9	0.9	0.9	20,000
C & P Homes Inc.	0.26	0.26	0.26	0.26	700,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	0.19	0.19	0.19	0.19	520,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.36	0.36	0.36	0.38	450,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	1.44	1.46	1.44	1.44	3,369,000
SM Development Corp.	1.58	1.58	1.58	1.58	10,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	7.5	7.5	7.5	7.5	624,000
MINING					
Abra Mining & Industrial	0.0065	0.0065	0.006	0.0065	150,000,000
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.3	0.31	0.3	0.3	2,020,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co B	0.31	0.32	0.31	0.32	810,000
Manila Mining Corp. A	0.013	0.013	0.013	0.013	5,100,000
Manila Mining Corp. B	0.018	0.018	0.018	0.018	11,000,000
Omico Corp.	0.006	0.006	0.006	0.006	109,000,000
Philex Mining Corp. A	0.87	0.87	0.87	0.87	70,000
Philex Mining Corp. B	0.99	1	0.99	1	950,000
Semirara Mining Corp.	28.5	30	28.5	30	203,900
United Paragon Mining Co.	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	150,000
OIL					
Sinophil Corp.	0.145	0.15	0.145	0.15	4,710,000

	SHARES	VALUE(P)
Bank & Fin Svc	9,662,360	177,908,925.00
Comm'l & Ind'l	84,668,821	423,405,550.00
PRO	7,771,000	25,807,200.00
Mining	279,303,900	9,805,400.00
OIL	4,710,000	698,500.00
GRAND TOTALS :	386,116,081	637,625,575.00
	AVERAGES	
Bank & Fin Svc	550.97	UP 1.79
Comm'l & Ind'l	2,974.33	UP 26.33
PRO	704.04	DOWN 2.41
Mining	2,477.22	UP 35.11
OIL	2.21	UNCH 0.00
SME	100.00	UNCH 0.00
All Shares Index	1,152.66	UP 7.45
Composite	1,886.61	UP 11.20

T-bill rates continue . . .

From page B1

thority to raise the VAT rate from 10 to 12 percent next year.

Cruz said that with the positive developments related to the country's fiscal standing, together with the improved outlook by Fitch Ratings, it was necessary to update foreign investors who might want to place their money in government-issued bonds.

The national treasurer said the government's economic team would go on a no-deal roadshow in Europe and the United States in June to discuss fiscal developments in the Philippines among foreign investors.

According to the government's borrowing program, the Philippines still has to raise $850 million through bond issuances to complete its $4-billion foreign borrowing requirement for the year.

The government is targeting to complete its foreign borrowing program in the third quarter. Earlier, the government raised $2.25 billion through two separate bond flotations.

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID
Provincial Government of Isabela

The Bids and Awards Committee (BAC) of the Province of Isabela invites interested bidders to apply for eligibility and to bid for the following requirements and supplies:

Date and Time & Place of Bidding	Item Description	Allocated Budget
July 1, 2005, 10.00 A.M. Capitol Building, Alibagu Ilagan, Isabela	Drugs and Medicines/Medical Supplies	P23 Million
	Veterinary, Janitorial, Office, Electrical and Firefighting Supplies, & Office Equipment	P 7 Million
	Hospital Equipment/Surgical Instruments	P 5 Million

Contract Duration: Four (4) months from the date of award
Delivery Period: Fifteen (15) Calendar days

NOTE : A Pre-bidding Conference will be held on June 20, 2005 at 10:00 o'clock in the morning at the Governor's Mini-Conference Hall, Capitol Building, Alibagu, Ilagan, Isabela.

Complete sets of Application form for Eligibility and Bid Documents may be obtained from the BAC Secretariat's Office, Capitol Building, Alibagu, Ilagan Isabela, upon payment of a non-refundable amount of THREE THOUSAND PESOS (Php3,000.00), Philippine Currency to the Provincial Treasurer's Office, starting June 15, 2005. No bid documents will be issued 3 days before the date of bidding.

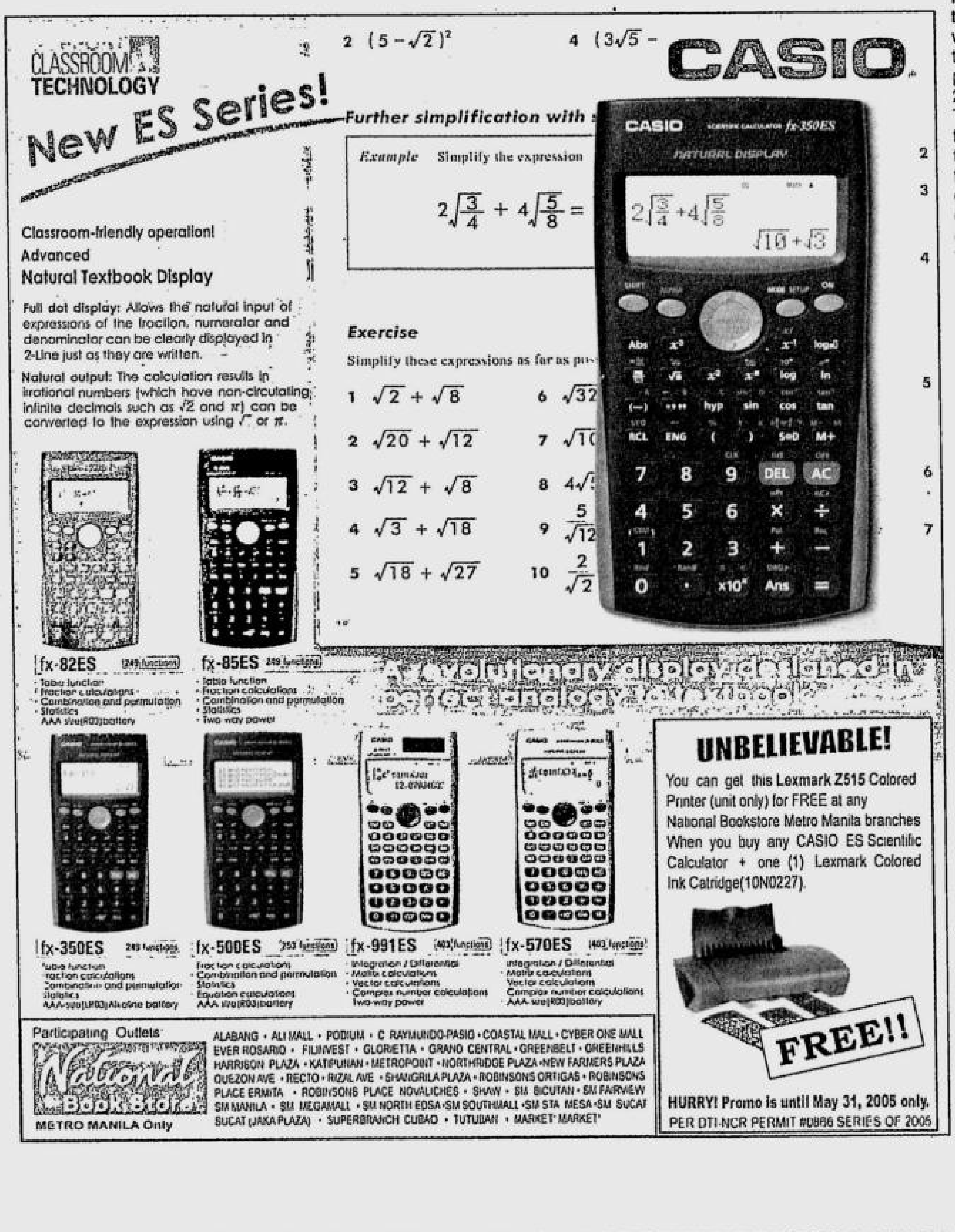
Bids will be received at the assigned Bidding Room on the date and time specified above after which Eligibility Requirements and Bid Proposals will be opened in the presence of attending bidders.

All particulars to Eligibility Statement and Screening, Bid Security, Performance Security, Pre-Bidding Conference, Evaluation Bids, Post-Qualification and Award of Contract shall be governed by the pertinent provisions of R.A. No. 9184 and its implementing Rules and Regulations.

The Province of Isabela reserves the right to reject any or all bids at any time prior to award of contract waive any defects therein, and accept the offer most advantageous to the government, without thereby incurring any of the following: (a) liability whatsoever to offset expenses or losses the bidder may incur in the preparation of the bids and (b) obligation to inform the affected bidder/s of the grounds for the basis of the BAC's action

(Sgd.) MA. THERESA A. FLORES
Chairperson, Bids and Awards Committee

(PDI-May 24 & 31, 2005)



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Simplify these expressions as far as pos

1 $\sqrt{2} + \sqrt{8}$
2 $\sqrt{20} + \sqrt{12}$
3 $\sqrt{12} + \sqrt{8}$
4 $\sqrt{3} + \sqrt{18}$
5 $\sqrt{18} + \sqrt{27}$

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GOOD PROSPECTS

British government sees RP economy growing

By Carla P. Gomez
PDI Visayas Bureau

BACOLOD CITY—The British government is confident that the Philippine economy will grow over the next two to three years.

Peter Beckingham, British Ambassador to the Philippines, said on Sunday that Britain has even included the Philippines among the eight countries where it launched a new program for better economic governance.

"We are looking at helping improve the way government corporations are run and eradicating corruption in them," he said.

The passage of the Expanded Value Added Tax, he added, will also hopefully further strengthen the Philippine economy.

Beckingham also noted that President Macapagal-Arroyo appointed some very strong economic leaders.

He said Trade and Industry Secretary Juan Santos recently spoke to leaders of about 80 British companies in Manila, and gave a very impressive presentation of how the Philippine economy was improving.

Britain is the biggest European investor in the country, said Beckingham, who was in Negros Occidental for the launching of the national bioethanol program in San Carlos City Monday.

Bronzeoak, a British firm, is one of the investors in a P1.5-billion ethanol and power plant to be built in San Carlos City.

Beckingham said there were a lot of British firms doing business in the Philippines that were not just taking money out of the country but were generating jobs in the country.

The Hong Kong Shanghai Banking Corp. is going to create 4,000 jobs in the Philippines through the development of call centers, he said.

"The bank is expanding in the Philippines in a very big way," he added.

The Financial Times in England also has a back office operation in Manila.

The newspaper has one journalist in the country but employs 70 people in Manila to do all their accounting, said Beckingham.

"Our role in the embassy is to try to get more British investments in the Philippines," he said, adding that the two countries enjoyed a "very good" political relationship.

The Ambassador said there were still a lot of job opportunities for Filipino nurses in Britain, as Filipino nurses were very popular in Britain.

There were more Filipino nurses in Britain than from neighboring Ireland and from India, he added.

Beckingham said there were 130,000 Filipinos in Britain who were making a real contribution to its economy, not just in nursing.

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Tourism, infra seen key to Bicol growth

BACACAY, Albay—President Macapagal-Arroyo said here last week that both the promotion of tourism and investing in infrastructure projects were the keys to boosting the economy of the Bicol region.

"There's no doubt that Bicol's majestic Mayon Volcano continues to draw tourists from around the world, but at this point in time, there should be more—other than that—to help Bicol's tourism," the President said in her visit to the Misibis Residential Beach Resort, a world-class residential resort and beachfront spa in Cagraray Island in this town.

"That's why I would say now that I'm encouraging them to savor other attractions in the region like surfing along the Pacific side of Bicol, such as in Caramoan, Camarines Sur and the province of Catanduanes, *butanding* [whale shark] sightings in Donsol, Sorsogon, and even manta ray sightings in Ticao in Masbate," President Arroyo added.

She said it was one of her agenda to make Bicol one of the popular tourism destinations in the country, after Boracay in Aklan, for the region has potentials to boost of economic tourism zones.

For purposes of infrastructure and investment, President Arroyo said she had roughly divided the country into four parts—with Bicol included in the Central Philippines, together with the Visayas and some parts of Northern Mindanao—primarily for tourism.

The President added that a potential international airport in Barangay Alobo, Daraga, Albay was also one of her priorities with Naga airport, which will undergo improvements as it has been allocated P1.5 million for lighting from the Air Transportation Office in 2003 and almost P7 million for terminal building and parking area rehabilitation from the Department of Public Works and Highways in 2004. *Gil Francis G. Arevalo, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

4 firms vie for geothermal plant contract

VALENCIA, Negros Oriental—Four foreign companies will vie for the P1.6-billion power optimization project in this town that would generate additional energy for the Visayas grid.

The project's proponents have initially targeted to generate 20 megawatts to be added to the existing 80 MW generated by Palimpinon II, an official of the Philippine National Oil Company-Environmental Development Corp. (PNOC-EDC) earlier said.

But PNOC-EDC president Paul Aquino told reporters here recently that the firm's current approach was for the project developer to generate the most electricity from the available geothermal steam.

Aquino did not identify the construction firms interested in undertaking the project but described them as Japanese, French and American companies.

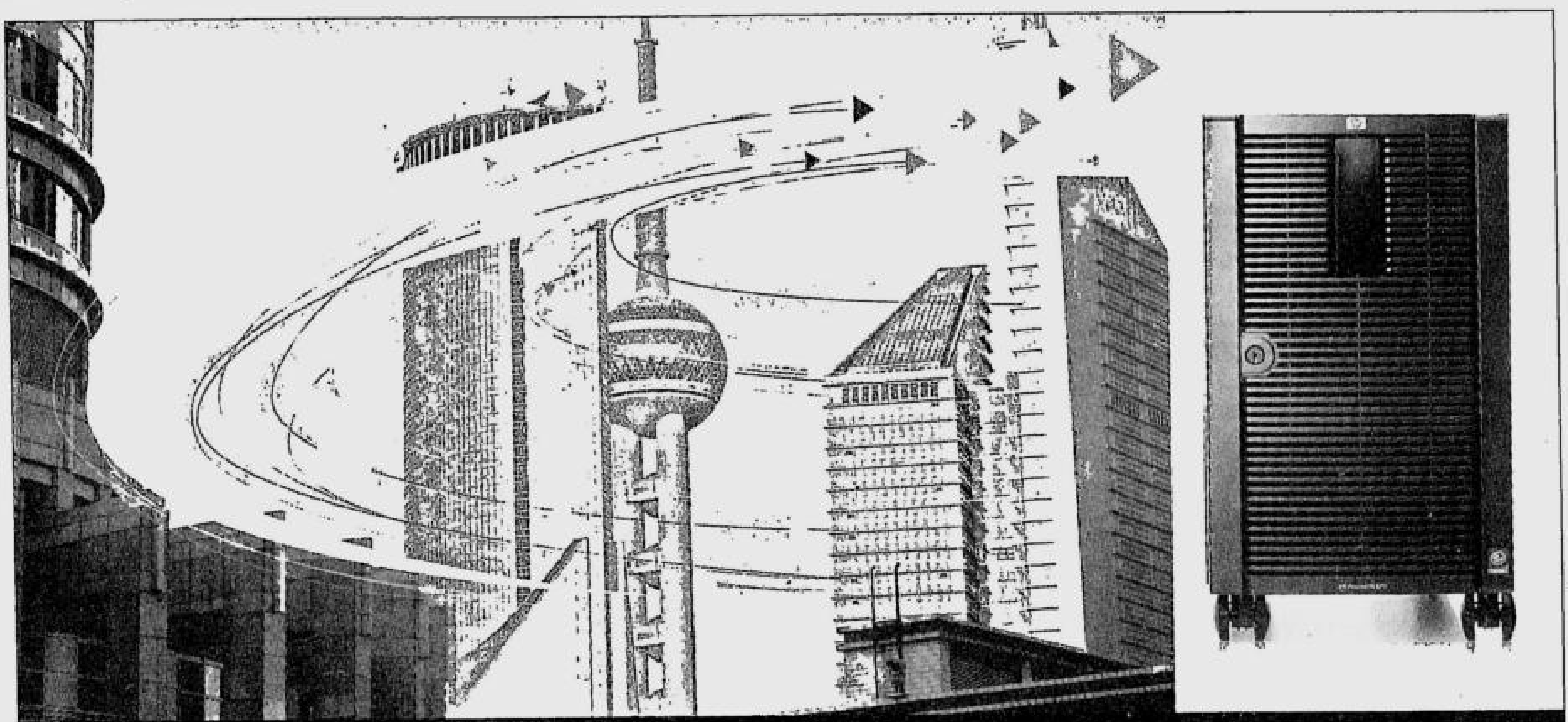
He said the project would be funded from a P1.6 billion loan that the PNOC-EDC obtained last year from the Development Bank of the Philippines.

Since the money is locally sourced, the project was supposed to be undertaken only by a Filipino-owned company, but PNOC-EDC sought an exemption since no Filipino-owned company could do the job.

Danilo Catigtig, resident manager of PNOC-EDC's Southern Negros Geothermal Production Field, added that among the few that have the capability to assemble turbines were Japanese, American, French and Italian companies.

Catigtig said the project developer would be responsible for the engineering, procurement and construction of the new power plant, including the manufacturing of turbines and generators.

Aquino said the four foreign construction firms would undergo the newly required "eligibility" clearance, which will include one from the Bureau of Internal Revenue. *Romy G. Amarado, PDI Visayas Bureau*



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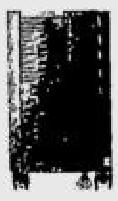

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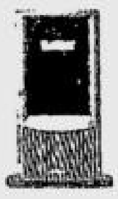

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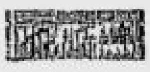

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May 30. 2005

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Dr. Jose N. Rodriguez Memorial Hospital invites responsible and duly accredited suppliers from DOH/CHD-NCR to apply for eligibility and to bid for the supply of the following items:

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G. Construction & Electircal Supplies
H. Drugs/Medicines (Pay Pharmacy)
I Medical Oxygen & LPG Gas

SCHEDULE OF BIDDING ACTIVITIES

Issuance of Bid Documents	June 10, 2005 (8.00 A.M. - 5:00 P.M.)
Pre-bid Conference	Items A-I June 10, 2005 (10:00 P.M.)

Submission & Opening of Bids :

Items.
A. June 21, 2005 (9:00 A.M.)
B. June 21, 2005 (10:00 A.M.)
C. June 21, 2005 (1:30 P.M.)
D. June 22, 2005 (10:00 A.M.)
E. June 22, 2005 (1:30 P.M.)
F. June 23, 2005 (10:00 A.M.)
G. June 23, 2005 (1:30 P.M.)
H. June 24, 2005 (10:00 A.M.)
I. June 24, 2005 (1:30 P.M.)

Prospective bidders may secure bid proposal form from the BAC Secretariat, Dr. Jose N. Rodriguez Memorial Hospital, upon payment of a non-refundable fee of Five Hundred Pesos (P500.00)

All activities shall be held at the Training Room, Dr. Jose N Rodriguez Memorial Hospital, Tala, Caloocan City, unless announced otherwise.

Each bid must be accompanied by a bidder's bond in the form of a certified check, manager's check, or GSIS Bond in an amount equivalent to a percentage of the approved budget for the contract to be bid. The Approved Budget Cost is stated on teh bid documents.

For further inquiries, interested bidders may contact the BAC Secretary or call telephone No. 962-9884 or 962-9888.

Dr. JNRMH reserves the right to accept or reject any bid and to annul the bidding process and rejecta ll bids at anytime prior to notice of award without thereby incurring any liability to the affected bidders or any obligation to inform the affected bidders of the grounds for the hospital's action.

(Sgd.) EDGARDO SA. JAVILLONAR, MD, MHA.
Chief of Sanitarium III

(PDI – May 31 & June 6, 2005)

Republic of the Philippines
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BULLETIN OF VACANT POSITIONS

In Compliance with RA 7041

A. HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT DIVISION

HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT ASSISTANT – Item No. OMBA-HRMAS-3-1998; SG-8; Education: Completion of two years studies in college; Experience: one year of relevant experience; Training: Four hours of relevant training; Eligibility: Career Service Subprofessional/First Level Eligibility

B. PUBLIC ASSISTANCE AND CORRUPTION PREVENTION OFFICE ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT GROUP

CLERK III – Item No. OMBA-CK3-29-1998. SG-6
Education: Completion of two (2) years studies in college; Experience: None required; Training: None required; Eligibility: Career Service Subprofessional/First Level Eligibility

C. FIELD INVESTIGATION OFFICE, GENERAL INVESTIGATION BUREAU (GIB-A)

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Education: Elementary School Graduate; Experience: None required; Training: None required; Eligibility: Driver (MC11, s. 96, Category II)

Applicants should submit within ten (10) working days from the date of this publication to the Human Resource Management Division at the above address, the following requirements:

1) A letter stating the position applied for,
2) Duly accomplished Personal Data Sheet (CSC Form 212);
3) 1" x 1" Picture (colored);
4) * Bar/Board Rating or CSC Certificate of Eligibility;
5) * Transcript of Records;
6) * Certificates of Seminars/Trainings attended;
7) * Service Records or Certificates from previous / present employers stating the positions assumed and corresponding actual duties and responsibilities (if applicable)
8) * Performance Appraisal Reports for the last two rating periods (for current government employees only);
9) Statement duly signed by the applicant as to any relative(s) within the fourth degree of consanguinity or affinity, currently employed with the Office of the Ombudsman.

* Where photocopies are filed, the documents must be certified as true copies by the proper authorities or the applicant may present the originals to the Human Resource Management Officer for comparison with the photocopies.

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The Approved Budget is P5,433,339.68 chargeable against CITY WIDE LAND & INFRA PROJECTS for the year 2005.

Application Forms for Eligibility may be secured from the GENERAL SERVICES OFFICE, Silay City starting May 24, 2005 - June 10, 2005

For the purpose of clarifying certain issues, a pre-bid conference will be held on June 28, 2005, at 2:00 p.m. at the Operation's Center, Sen. Jose C. Locsin Cultural & Civil Center, Silay City. Likewise sealed bids shall be received by the General Services Office, Silay City not later than 2:00 p.m. on July 12, 2005 at the same venue and shall be publicly opened immediately thereafter.

SILAY CITY GOVERNMENT reserves the right to reject any or all bids or parts thereof, to waive any informality therein, to abort the bidding process, to accept such bids or to award any part of the work to any bidder whose bid is considered most advantageous to SILAY CITY GOVERNMENT.

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BAC Chairman

(PDI--May 24 & 31, 2005)

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ROSARIO LUMINARIAS NERI

Now rests in the infinite warmth and embrace of our Lord.
*She joined her husband **German** on 29th of May 2005*
at the age of 88.

Her loving children **Nemy, Picio, Gerry, Efren, Leana, Imelda, Romy, Baby Antoinette, Boy Roger, Inday Salve** and their spouses; her ever loving grandchildren and great grandchildren; her relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at Arlington Memorial Chapels, 12 G. Araneta Avenue, Quezon City.

Interment will be on Sunday, June 5, 2005 at the Eternal Gardens Baesa, Caloocan City after the 2 p.m. Mass at the Arlington Chapels.

EMMA "MIRING" GAERLAN VDA. ONG - SEALQUIL

Peacefully joined the Lord on
the 28th of May 2005 at the age of 67.

Her remains lie at Arlington Memorial Chapels, 12-G. Araneta Avenue, Quezon City.

Interment will be on June 2, 2005 (Thursday) at the Loyola Memorial Park, Sucat, Parañaque after the 7 a.m. Mass at Arlington.

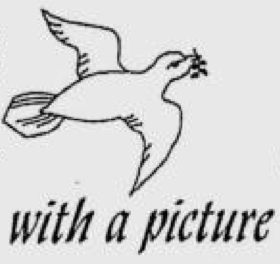
RENE G. FRESNOZA

Peacefully joined his Creator
on May 25, 2005 at the age of 70.

His bereaved wife Wilma; children Harz & Onofre, Jay & Aries, Beatle, Raffy & Arnie, Dhee & Leon, Jovy, Ella; brothers Nono & Romy; sisters Ligaya & Chichi; Papang Teddy; grandchildren & great grandchildren, relatives & friends request all pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at La Funeraria Paz, Araneta Ave., QC.

Cremation will be done on Wednesday, June 1, 2005 at 8:00 AM after the Mass.



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San Jose Parish Church, *Navotas, M.M.*	6:00 AM
The Parish of the Lord Divine Mercy, *Sikatuna Village, Q.C.*	6:00 PM
Christ the King of the Universe Parish *Bagbag, Q.C.*	7:00 PM
Parish of the Holy Sacrifice, *UP-Diliman, Q.C.*	6:00 PM
Santissimo Rosario Parish, *UST, Manila*	6:00 PM
Sto. Domingo Church, *Q.C.*	6:00 PM

The family request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

PAZ "Pacing" LACSON - MANGUBAT BRION

Peacefully joined the Lord
on May 26, 2005 at the age of 86.

Her bereaved children and children-in-law **Oscar & Baby Brion, Loida & Joe Gomez, Carlo & Minnie Brion, Aleli & Neri Villaceran, Evie & Najie Gapangada, May & Linton Abrenica, Arnel & Irene Brion, Larry & Lorie Brion**; grandchildren, sister **Patrocinio M. Saulog**, brother **Liborio L. Mangubat**, and all relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at the Resurrection Chapel, San Pablo Cathedral, San Pablo City.

Interment is on June 2, 2005 at San Gabriel Memorial Park, San Pablo City, after the 9:00 a.m. Mass at the Resurrection Chapel.

LAURENTE N. MARZO

Peacefully joined our Creator on
May 28, 2005 at the age of 50.

His bereaved wife **ROSARIO "TITA" MARFORI-MARZO**; children **LEN, IDA, MIA** and **ROZ**; parents **LIBRADO G. MARZO** (deceased) and **CRISTINA N. MARZO**, brothers and sisters **MYRNA M. MANGUERRA, NORMIE N. MARZO** (deceased), **ALEX N. MARZO, DELIO N. MARZO, VENGIE M. SAN JUAN, WINNIE N. MARZO, LIZA M. BORJA**, and **JOEY N. MARZO**, in laws, **TEDDY, ROSE, MARIE, NINA, LITO, VILMA, JUN** and **HELEN**, other relatives and friends request the readers to join them in praying for his eternal happiness in heaven.

His body lies in state at the Baguio La Funeraria Paz, Naguilian Road, Baguio City.

Cremation will take place on Wednesday, June 1, 2005 at the Beyond The Sunset Memorial Park, Irisan after the 8:00 a.m. Mass at the St. Vincent Church.

"A rare and great light has gone out,
but one that has made all
others shine brighter."

Our Dearly Beloved

Arsenio I. Viacrusis

(July 1, 1956)

Now peacefully rests in the
infinite Grace & Goodness of the Lord
on the 26th day of May 2005 at the age of 48.

His parents **Alfredo Sr.** (†) and **Lucia** (†); his wife **Tess**; children **Bea** and **Andrew**; brothers and sisters **Cesar** and **Belen**, **Ding** and **Miriam**, **Bot** and **Irish**, **Beng** and **Nanding** (†), **Jess** and **Rosie**, **Boy** and **Erma**, **Viring** and **Ave**, **Bong** and **Lea**; nephews and nieces **Vic, Jun, Albert, Jean, Rachelle, Mydee, Paul, Randy, Eric, Hernan, Tek, Lorie, Jay R, Mutya, Anne, Leo, Francis, Andy, Beth, Lucia Rin, Christian, Matty, AJ, Alec**, and **Janet**; friends and relatives request the pious readers to remember him in their prayers.

Interment will be at 2:00 p.m. on Thursday, June 2, 2005 at the Olongapo Memorial Park, Olongapo City.

Message of Thanks

† Vicente Jose Yap Velez M.D.

FPCP, FPCC, FACP

Enteng's wife, **Mayhu,** and their children, **VJ** and **Giselle**, **Gil B**, and **Nina** with **Paco** together with his brothers and sisters **Evalynne** and **Joseph Braun**, **Tito** and **Marina**, **Joy**, and **Apol** and **Vilma**, and other relatives would like to thank everyone who prayed with us, condoled with us, supported us in our time of sadness.

Benedict, when the storm rages around me, and I can hold on no more,
When the waves of tear engulf me and I am weary, battered and sore,
take me then and steer me storm-tossed, broken and afraid, into the arms
of your safe harbour safely home.
prayer to st. benedict – fr. dennis ward o.s.b.

HOC TI *"Nea"* L. BARRAZA

Now peacefully rests in the grace and goodness
of our Lord on May 23, 2005
at Mission Viejo, California, U.S.A. at the age of 66.

She will be missed by her loving husband **Nicolas** *"Chito"* **Barraza**, loving children & children-in-law **Rebecca & Robert Beaulac, Melissa & Ernesto Ngo, Randy & Isabel Barraza, Yolanda Barraza, Irvin & Marilyn Barraza & Jo-Ann & Loreto Sy**, 14 grandchildren, relatives and friends.

Her cremains lie in state at the Christ the King Church-Chapel C, Greenmeadows Ave., Quezon City. Interment of ashes will be on June 3, 2005, Friday at 10:00 a.m. at the Christ the King Crypt.

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Jobs@D'Mall.VisMin: bringing more jobs to Visayas and Mindanao

FROM June 21 to 24, 2005, Metro Cebu will play host to one of the largest and most exciting job fairs this year. Called Jobs@D'Mall.VisMin, this event is organized by industry giants John Clements Consultants, Inc., the Cebu Educational Development Foundation for Information Technology (Cedf-it), the Cebu Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Ayala Center Cebu, the Philippine Daily Inquirer, the Cebu Daily News, and ABS-CBN Cebu. As the name suggests, the Ayala Center Cebu will be the venue for this exciting event.

The event will be kicked off by a one-day series of seminars on June 21, entitled "CareerConference@JohnClements", which is designed to help job seekers in choosing the career path that fits them best. The job fair itself will last from June 22 to 24, where the best candidates from Visayas and Mindanao have their choice of the job opportunities awaiting them. Candidates can expect several openings in the call center industry and other IT-related jobs, which have a growing demand for the talents available in Visayas and Mindanao.

These events coincide with Cebu Business Month and the highly anticipated ICT Cebu 2005.

BUSINESS

Euro slips on French 'no;' Asian stocks gain

SINGAPORE—The euro weakened broadly on Monday after France voted against a European Union constitution by a bigger-than-expected margin, while Asian stock markets hit six-week highs, led by strength in tech shares.

Share markets in Japan, South Korea, Taiwan and Australia hit fresh six-week highs, mostly led by tech shares such as Fujitsu Ltd., which rose 3.1 percent, and flat screen maker LG.Philips LCD, up 4.3 percent at a new record high.

"The Tokyo market is finding support from signs that selling by foreign investors is peaking out and a consensus that US stocks have bottomed out," said Takahiko Murai, general manager of equities at Nozomi Securities.

The Nikkei share average rose 0.66 percent to 11,266.33, after gaining 1.5 percent on Friday. MSCI's index of non-Japan Asian markets was 0.36 percent higher.

Hong Kong's Hang Seng Index headed into the afternoon session 0.45 percent higher, led by a 1 percent rise in properties stock index, while Singapore shares gained 0.5 percent.

Taiwan's TAIEX rose 0.3 percent to finish above 6,000 for the first time since the 8th of April, while Australia's S&P ASX 200 gained 0.4 percent on gains in top global miner BHP Billiton.

The euro fell broadly, but not sharply, sagging more than half a cent against the dollar in Asia after French voters rejected the proposed European Union constitution.

NON
à la Constitution
au gouvernement
à Chirac

"NO" VOTE supporters celebrate after France voted against the ratification of the European constitution in Paris' Place de la Bastille. REUTERS

Preliminary estimates put the "no" vote at 55 percent, higher than most polls suggested before the referendum on Sunday.

The euro fell as low as $1.2510 from around $1.2580 in late New York trade on Friday. It was holding near $1.2522 clear of a seven-month low around $1.2495 hit last week.

Against the yen, the single European currency fell to around 135.06 yen from 135.65. It slipped about 0.2 percent against the Swiss franc to 1.5450 and was down against the pound at around 68.70.

"The market had been pricing in a 'no' vote in the run up to the referendum, and there is nothing particularly surprising in the outcome. Having said that, it does increase the risk that the political, general integration would be slowed down," said Daisuke Uno, Market Analyst at Sumitomo Mitsui Bank in Tokyo.

Japanese government bond (JGB) prices were little changed after industrial production data came in close to expectations. *Reuters*

Airlines see more losses, consolidation

TOKYO—The global airline industry said Monday its losses would mount to $6 billion this year as high fuel prices and soaring costs in North America outpace growth in Asia and predicted more consolidation.

Opening a two-day meeting in Tokyo, the International Air Transport Association (Iata) called on governments to pursue business-friendly policies and lashed out at a French-German proposal to tax air tickets to aid the developing world.

Iata said it has done its part to adapt after the Sept. 11, 2001 attacks shook up global air travel. It said it has slashed costs and last year saw its safest year with only 428 people killed in commercial air crashes.

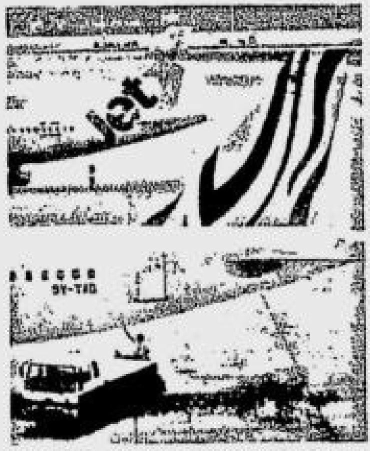
"Losses between 2001 and 2004 exceeded $36 billion. And we will lose another $6 billion this year," Iata director general Giovanni Bisignani told the opening of the meeting attended by 265 companies.

Iata, which represents 95 percent of the world's air carriers, had previously estimated losses for 2005 at $5.5 billion.

"Parts of the industry are profitable. But the margins are not acceptable for a $400-billion industry. Urgent action and change are needed," Bisignani said.

Iata plans to slash costs including the complete replacement of paper tickets with electronic ones by 2007.

Air France chair and chief executive Jean-Cyril Spinetta said high energy costs would accelerate consolidation of the industry.



WHILE other airlines are losing money, budget groups like Jet Asia and Tiger Airways are raking in profits. AFP

"Consolidation is the future, it's a must," Bisignani said separately.

Bisignani called the price of fuel "the fifth horseman of the apocalypse," saying the industry's expected fuel bill this year was $83 billion.

Non-fuel costs were forecast to drop by 4.5 percent this year, said Bisignani, who lamented that the aviation industry had in the past been "too weak with labor".

The success story of the industry has been Asia, where airlines posted $2.6 billion in profit last year.

"Strong growth fueled by China and low labor costs are the competitive advantage" in Asia, Bisignani said.

He said India, which has seen a nascent fare-cutting war to encourage air traffic, "may be the next great market for the industry." *AFP*

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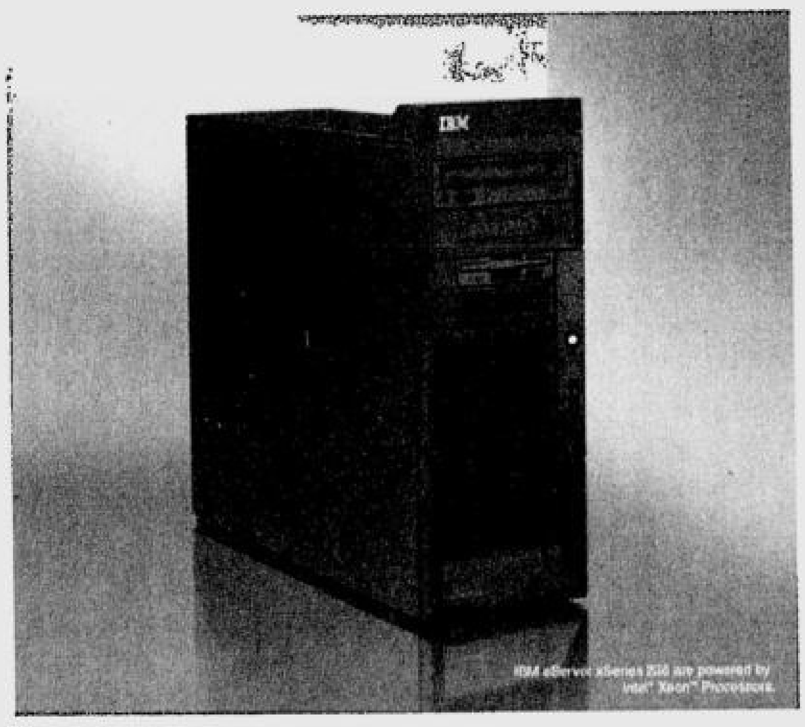
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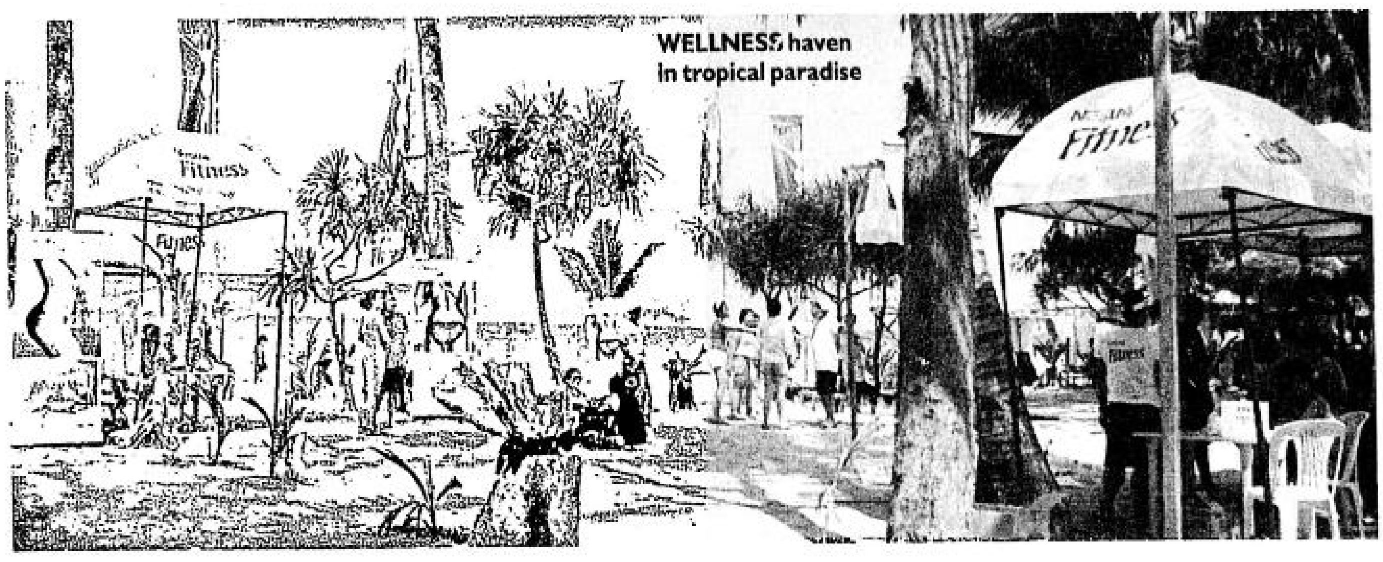
WELLNESS haven in tropical paradise

Some visitors of the famed island not only enjoyed sand and sea but also a good workout

By Shirley Oh
Contributor

GOOD food, good life." Add to that "good times," what people, who participated in the recent wellness seminar organized by Nestlé Fitness Cereal in Boracay, had.

Beach bums of all ages, shapes and sizes enjoyed four days of fitness with the help of the wellness station Nestlé Fitness Cereal set up on the Boracay beach. There were stalls for free fitness consultation, free henna tattooing sessions, free massages and free tastes of Nestlé Fitness Cereal, with an array of toppings to choose from.

Main draw

The biggest attraction, however, was the

TANNED/ C3

ZEN moment

REEMA Chanco in yoga pose

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One Hudred Thousand Pesos Php100,000.00
CHAMPION
NESTEA BEACH VOLLEY 2005
VANESSA ESTAVILLO
AUTHORIZED SIGNATURE

WINNERS. The Nestea Beach Volley 2005 champs—CSB's Arnold Laniog, SWU's Florian Gutierrez and Marites Natad, and CSB's Janley Patrona

FIBV president Roger Banzuela, Nestlé Beach Volley tournament director Otie Camangian, Nestlé AVP and Nestea brand manager Tina Samaco, Nestlé AVP for promos and events Raymond Villaflor and Nestlé brand events specialist for Nestea Bun Estavillo

HOTSHOTS. Nestlé executives Monica Camus, Mark Reyes, Joel Andres, food services brand manager for beverages Jamie Lim and Kristy Tesoro

Last volley of summer

NESTEA
Fifty Thousand Pesos Php 50,000.00
SECOND PLACE
VANESSA ESTAVILLO

MEN'S division second placers Joseph Alguno and Jonrey Sasing of USJ-R

NESTEA
please

BORACAY hosted this year's most exciting summer event, the Nestea Beach Volley 2005

WITHOUT BATTING AN EYELASH

Maurice Arcache

Photos by Alex Van Hagen using **Kodak** EasyShare system

SEVERAL fab beach volleyball athletes dazzled us during the successful three-day one-of-a-kind 9th Nestea Beach Volley 2005 in Boracay, which *moi* always looks forward to, *palanggas*.

Hot athletes stood apart from the others because of their amazing athleticism and stamina.

The first day of the games was the much-awaited Nestea match, with hotshots from the movies and modeling world showing how good or bad they were off the screen and ramp, *palanggas*. Models **Brent Javier**, **Nicolette Bell** and **Bubbles Paraiso** joined actors **Nancy Castiliogne**, **Epi Quizon** and Hey Jude Resorts owner **Jude Lee** in Team A.

Team B consisted of models **Rissa Samson**, **Valerie de los Santos**, **Robby Mananquil**, **Ornusa Cadness**, **Borgy Manotoc**, and television personality **Geoff Rodriguez**.

Zapped

Well, to make a long story short, Team B was zapped by Team A. Too bad, huh!

The biggest attraction were the hottest volleyball champs from universities and schools around the country, including Manille, who all took part in this hot beach action, *palanggas*.

The highest award, Most Valuable Player, was presented to spitfire **Florian Gutierrez** of Cebu's Southwestern University (SWU) and **Janley Patrona** of the men's division champion, De la Salle University-College of St. Benilde (DLSU-CSB) in Manila.

Thunderous applause, whistles and yells were received by the biggest winners, Florian and **Marites Natad** , who is also from SWU that managed to secure an unprecedented third consecutive women's title. **Liezl Manatad** and **Mylin Que** of University of Mindanao-Tagum finished second, the highest finish ever for a Mindanao team, while **Mechell Matuguina** and **Julett Mae Marikit** of University of San Jose-Recoletos (USJ-R) also in Cebu were third.

Top hunks

Those macho hunks at the top of the honor roll were good-looking **Arnold Laniog** and **Janley Patrona** of DLSU-CSB. Second-place honors went to **Joseph Alguno** and **Jonrey Sasing** of USJ-R. **Yusop Abdulkarim**, who grabbed the Best Setter award, and **Gabshar Tahiluddin**, who received the Best Scorer award, both of the Mindanao State University in Tawi Tawi, finished third.

Without batting an eyelash, *palanggas*, this Boracay happening was the most exciting and most prestigious annual summer sports event in the island paradise. Hot 72 teams representing 44 colleges and universities were trimmed down to 24 teams from 18 schools for the final round.

The teams competed for a total of over half a million pesos in prizes and cool Nestle products.

Apres the last ball had been struck, with some of the amazing athletes passing out from complete exhaustion under the sizzling sun, top organizers of Nestea handed out several special awards to the athletes, "in recognition of their contributions to the event and the sport of beach volley."

The best, however, was—as always—saved for the last. Music icon Bamboo brought the house down at D'Mall D'Boracay beachfront where it performed during the victory party superbly hosted by gorgeous **Tisha Silang** and super hunk Geoff Rodriguez.

The place was packed elbow to elbow, with everyone dancing and singing to Bamboo's super hits. As usual, cool lead singer **Bamboo Mañalac**'s showmanship and vocal performance were absolutely exceptional.

Fitting

The party was truly a fitting finale to the super action-packed days of beach volley action and the most happening parties, proofs of why, each summer, Boracay just keeps taking the plunge and saying "Nestea please."

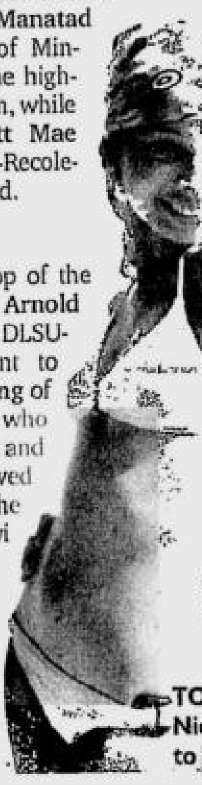
Moi couldn't help but notice the happy and satisfied expression on the face of Nestea's brand manager, brilliant mega lady **Tina Samaco**, together with the dean of PRs, workasonic **Edd Fuentes** of the in-demand Fuentes Publicity Network Inc., who were super pleased over the smashing success of this hot summer event. Wow!

The 9th Nestea Beach Volley was sponsored by Speedo, Mikasa, Cebu Pacific, Hey Jude Resorts, La Salle Greenhills, Villa de Oro, Coppertone, Boracay Regency, D'Mall D'Boracay, Power Plant Mall, National Sports Grill and clickthecity.com.

MOI and Smart Addict model Borgy Manotoc

BAMBOO Mañalac got Bora rocking.

GIO Alvarez of Makatha



TOP MODEL Nicolette Bell ready to hit the ball

MYX VJ and TV/movie star Luis Manzano chilling with a cool Nestea

NESTEA
NESTLE

SUPER handsome Joseph Alguno of the University of San Jose-Recoletos

COLLEGE of St. Benilde's good-looking Arnold Laniog

DR. JOEL Samaco and brilliant Nestlé AVP and Nestea brand manager, *la simpatica* Tina Samaco, with son Xavier and daughter Matt

NESTLÉ MOVERS AND SHAKERS. Jet Cornejo, food services AVP for coffee and beverages; Maureen Guiao, brand events specialist for Nescafé; Richie Cruz, resident Nestea bartender; and Vanessa Villafuerte

FANTASTIC action by models and movie stars

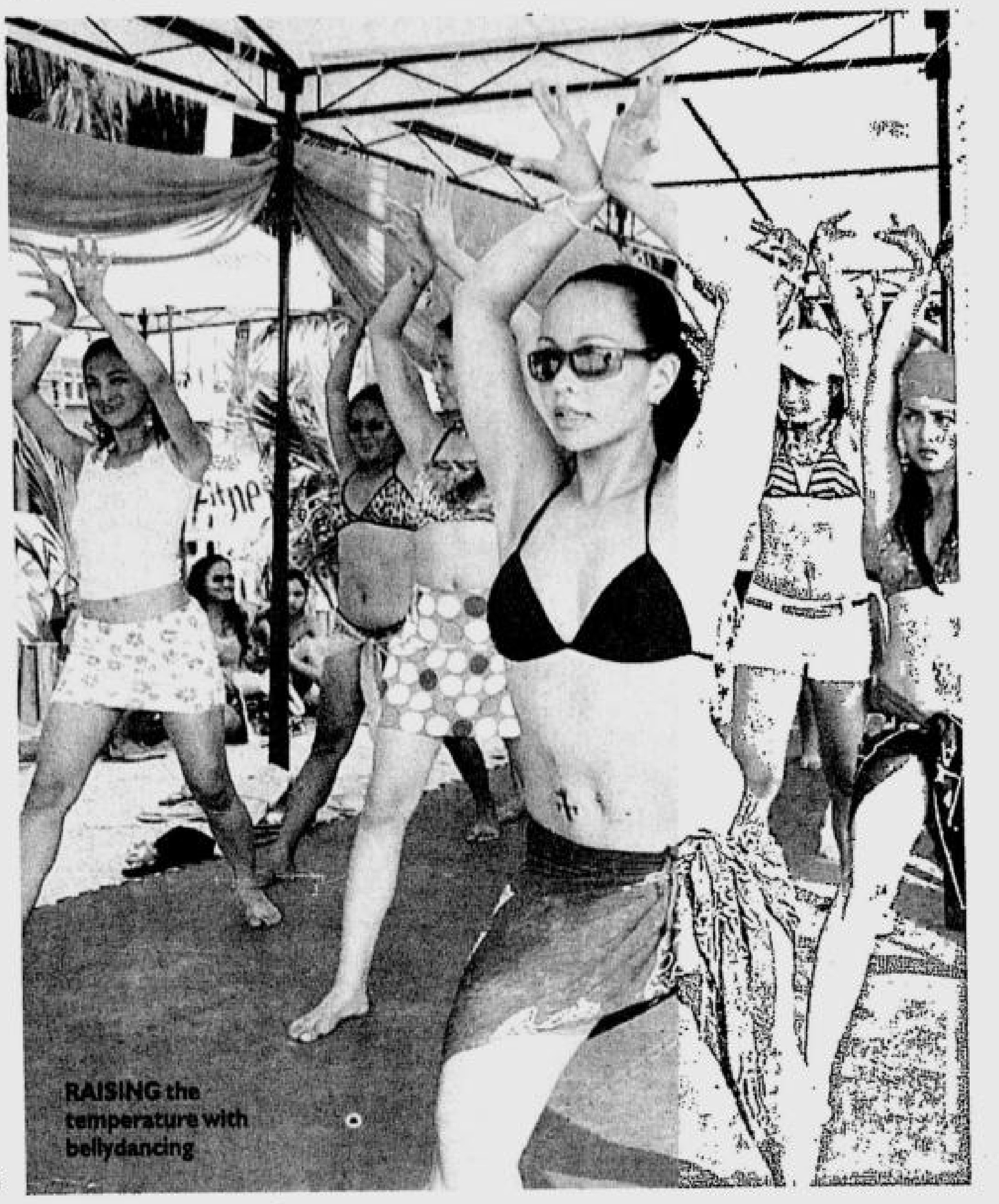
PHOTO BY DINDO GUTIERREZ

NESTEA
MIKASA

AWESOME. Volleyball's hottest stars from various schools

PHOTO BY DINDO GUTIERREZ

THE NESTLÉ Fitness Cereal wellness seminar aimed to help people have a fit and healthy body through proper diet and physical activity.



RAISING the temperature with bellydancing

Tanned and fit in Boracay

From page C1

workout area where free cardio classes were held from morning till afternoon. Yoga, body combat, belly dancing and body balance classes were led by energetic Nestlé Fitness instructors who continuously encouraged participants to give a little more energy and burn a little more fat.

Different crowds, from bikini- and trunks-clad set to the more covered-up group of parents, joined in the fun of sweating out under the sun with a beautiful beach for background. Even fit celebrity Reema Chanco joined in the stretching and did a belly dancing move or two.

Cups of Nestlé Pure mineral water were readily available for everyone and, in between classes, participants relished the laid-back island life as they luxuriated in the free massages offered by Nestlé Fitness.

One of many

The Boracay wellness seminar was just one of many activities Nestlé Phils. has lined up for its wellness campaign, "Let's Talk Wellness with Nestlé." In keeping with the company slogan, "Good Food, Good Life," Nestlé Phils. aims to help people become more health-conscious not only by introducing nutritious food products but also by encouraging consumers to adopt healthy lifestyles.

The Nestlé Fitness Cereal wellness seminar's major thrust was to help people feel good about themselves by having a fit and healthy body through healthy eating and physical activity. The well-attended workout sessions proved to be a welcome alternative to swimming and dining, that seems to be the main activities of Boracay guests. People who don't get the chance to exercise often enjoyed participating in the classes while regular gym goers were happy for the opportunity to do their fitness regimen even while on vacation.

After the success of the first wellness seminar, Nestlé Phils. is looking forward to making this activity a yearly summer event.

FITNESS instructors in good form

FRESH RAW JUICES AS INSTANT ENERGIZERS!

Do you often feel stressed-out, lost your zest, feel emaciated or even at times have difficulty controlling your appetite? Then, your body is not at its peak working condition and lacks certain nutrients & vitamins to function well.

Raw, freshly made juices are a very good source of vitamins and minerals. Vitamins activate enzymes which act as catalysts in hundreds of thousands of chemical reactions that take place throughout our body.

Think of it as "instant energy"! Freshly extracted fruit & vegetable juices are absorbed directly by our cells as compared to eating them whole. By extracting juices of fruits and vegetables, we break down the fibers to release the trapped nutrients.

Condition	Recommended Juice Mix
Tired body, Jetleg, Hangover	Apple, Orange, Carrot, Beetroot
Tension	Apple, Pineapple, Mint, Lime
Stress reduction	Tomato, Carrot, Coriander, Broccoli, Celery
Better Digestion	Apple, Beetroot, Ginger, Carrot
Detoxifying Body	Apple, Grapefruit, Watermelon, Ginger
Skin Problems	Carrot, Bell Pepper, Spinach

Note: Be sure to mix only fruits with fruits & veggies with veggies

To get the maximum nutritional benefit of fresh juicing, it is equally important to use a low-speed (80 rpm), non-metal blade juice extractor like Matstone, so as not to kill natural vitamins and minerals of fruits & vegetables, usually the result from high-speed, metal bladed juicers.

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For more information on Matstone Juice Extractor, call 373-7396, 97 & 99 or visit all branches of Rustans, True Value, Shopwise, Royal Subic and DeliFresh.

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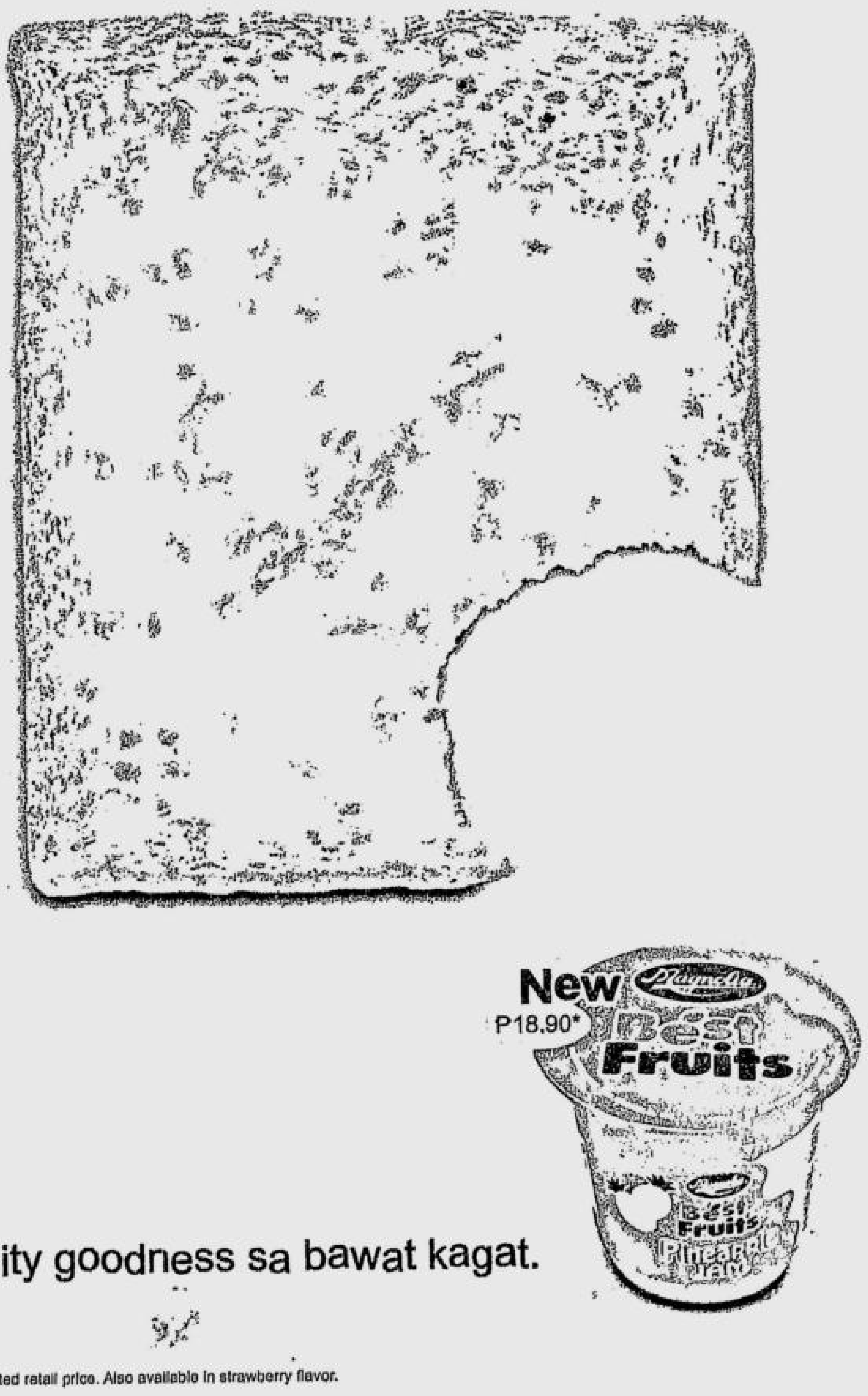

*Suggested retail price. Also available in strawberry flavor.

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Take Charge Doc!

What is the treatment for both AIDS and HIV?

Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) is an infection that targets the body's immune system. The number of immune cells of the body that remain from attacks of HIV dictate whether an individual has Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome (AIDS)--a stage where the body has been greatly depleted of its defense mechanisms that render it unable to fight off infectious agents commonly present in our environment.

Currently, there is no means of absolutely ridding patients of the HIV infection and thus, preventive measures like safe sexual practices remain our first line of defense. However, success has been realized with use of antiretroviral drugs that limit further damage by the virus to the body's immune system. It is usually within 10 years for HIV infection, from the time when no notable symptoms of the disease are present, to progress to AIDS without intervention. However, with daily maintenance of antiretroviral drugs, this progression has been prevented and equates to a long life as if one did not have the disease. Those who already have AIDS also benefit from antiretroviral therapy by the prevention of a more severe state. But since they are already suffering from markedly suppressed immune systems, they may still be susceptible to recurrent infections.

This week's answer was provided by MEDICard accredited specialist, Dr. Edwin L. Dimatatac. Dr. Dimatatac finished his studies for Doctor of Medicine from the Pamantasan ng Lungsod ng Maynila and is an Internist from the Ospital ng Maynila Medical Center. Doc Edwin also subspecializes in Infectious Diseases. At present, Dr. Dimatatac is an associate professor for the College of Medicine of the University of Perpetual Help Biñan and a member of the Training Committee of the Dept. of Medicine of MPI-Medical Center Muntinlupa (MPI-MCM). He also holds key positions for the Infection Control Committees of MPI-MCM, Asian Hospital and Medical Center (Nosocomial Infection Surveillance) and the Ospital ng Maynila. MEDICard members may visit him for consultations at Room 9 of the Alabang Medical Clinic, Putatan St., Muntinlupa, every Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays from 8 to 10 AM, at Room 12 of the Alabang Medical Clinic, Montillano St., Muntinlupa, every Tuesdays and Thursdays from 8 AM to 12 noon and on Wednesdays and Fridays from 4 to 6 PM and at Room 332 of the MPI-MCM, every Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays from 5 to 7 PM.

MEDICard's Medical Director, Dr. Nicky Montoya answers questions on health through the assistance and expertise of MEDICard's network of accredited specialists. Write to Dr. Nicky or E-mail him at inquiry@medicardphils.com for your inquiries on health matters.

Nicky

MEDICard PHILIPPINES, INC.: 9th floor Sagittarius Building H.V. dela Costa Street, Salcedo Village, Makati City 1227 Trunkline: 887-2020 Fax No.: 884-6720; 810-3856 Text: Key in MEDICARD and send to 2344 (Globe & Touch Mobile) or 4627 (Smart & Talk N' Text) E-mail: inquiry@medicardphils.com Website: www.medicardphils.com

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- To load up via text, you will need a minimum of ₱20 (exclusive of Convert-a-Load) in your account to purchase 24/7 Text Unlimited Lite.
- After texting the keywords to 247, you will receive a text message containing the number series ***220#** followed by a 14-digit number string. Once you receive this, just load up by doing the following:
  - Key in ***220#** followed by the 14-digit number string then the # sign. Ensure that there are no spaces between characters then press SEND.

    OR
  - Dial **220**, press **1** then enter the 14-digit number string.

  Note: For security purposes, it is best to load up immediately after you receive the 14-digit number string.
- Upon loading the number string, you will immediately receive a text message reflecting your updated regular load balance. This means that 24/7 Text Unlimited Lite has been activated and you can start enjoying the service until it expires. Real-time loading, no need to wait!
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Eat more, lose more

INSIDE OUT

Cory Quirino

The stomach is more sensitive to the volume, rather than the number of calories of food

"I have a rumbly in my tummy."
—Winnie The Pooh

EVERYONE's dream diet is to eat more without gaining weight. This is not impossible. Although in Winnie The Pooh's case, it is.

A common complaint of dieters is they are always hungry. According to Barbara J. Rolls, Ph.D., professor of nutritional sciences, Pennsylvania State University in State College and co-author of The Volumetrics Weight Control Plan, "your stomach is more sensitive to the volume of the food you eat than to the number of calories the food contains."

Recent studies have shown that if you slash your daily caloric intake—say, from over 2,500 to 1,500—by eating smaller portions of your meals, you will most likely feel starved and deprived before the next meal time.

This situation can lead to cheating by nibbling on snack items on the side. What's the solution? Eat low-energy density foods that can add bulk to your tummy signaling your brain you are full.

What to eat

Foods high in fiber or water will make you feel more than satisfied. You won't have the urge to sneak around and wolf down the first thing you lay your hands on such as fast-food favorites like chips, crackers and pastries that are high-energy density foods.

Low-energy density foods: fruits, vegetables. High-energy density foods: cheese, crackers, fatty/oily meats, which have more calories than bulk making it necessary to eat more to feel full or satisfied.

Example: 2½ c of strawberries/apples and a medium-sized bowl of Jell-O is more diet-friendly than 2 tbsp of chocolate or even ¼ c of raisins.

Waist-watchers meal

Replace high-energy density foods with low-energy density foods. Example:

Instead of	Have
BREAKFAST: 1 cup canned grapefruit juice or pomelo juice 1 (5.5 ounce) carrot-raisin muffin coffee	1/2 grapefruit/pomelo/papaya juice 2 low-fat waffles/pancakes/ 2 slices whole grain bread 4 oz light yogurt 2 tsp chopped almonds
LUNCH: 6-inch ham slab with mayonnaise 1 carbonated drink	Ham and veggie wrap with honey mustard 1 c fresh fruit juice or fat-free/low-fat soy milk 1 wedge watermelon, half an apple or one orange
DINNER: Barbecued spareribs ½ c baked beans	5 oz pork tenderloin/chicken breast bowl of salad with vinegrette dressing 1 small baked potato or sweet red potato ¼ c rice, brown

Replace regular ice cream with soy ice cream (available at Chimara, Greenbelt 3 Theater, level 4, Tel: 7575652) or sorbet.

Before meals

Start with a course that can tame your appetite such as salad, soup or a fruit. These foods actually demand that they be eaten slowly thus allowing your stomach enough time to feel full. When you reach your main course, you will feel content to have smaller portions.

Remember: fatty cuts of meat should be avoided. Get leaner cuts with fewer calories. Experiment with flavors by using herbs and spices instead of butter and oil.

Meal math

When doing the groceries, do a little mathematics if you want to determine whether the food you are buying is low-energy density. Most packaged foods include nutrition facts at the back.

To get the ED or energy density, calculate by dividing the calories per serving by the weight of the serving in grams.

Example: If ½ c of ice cream weighs 74 g and has 180 calories, divide 180 calories by 74 g. You get an ED of 2.4.

ED below 0.6 = very low (most fruits/veggies, reduced fat milk, light yoghurt, broth soups)

ED 0.6-1.5 = low (cottage cheese, low-fat meats like turkey chicken breast without skin, sea food, pasta, rice, eggs, corn, legumes)

ED 1.5-4 = medium (hard candy, pretzels, fat-free chips, cheese, regular meats)

ED 4-9 = high (crackers, chips, chocolate, candy, cookies, nuts, bacon, butter oil)

Eat smart

Avoid fried foods (boiled shrimp is okay and has no calories. When you fry it, you get 275 calories).

Cut back on dry foods like crackers. These will tempt you to eat more.

Eat more fruits and vegetables.

Combine (if you have to) low-energy with high-energy.

Take high-fiber grains instead of low fiber foods.

The dieters' battle cry should be, "I will eat more health-friendly foods because I am my own best friend."

Love and light!

Reference: Good Housekeeping, August 2004
"Lose Weight without Going Hungry"

Veggie Snax
Söy Milk
BURP!

ILLUSTRATION BY ANTHONY MISTADES

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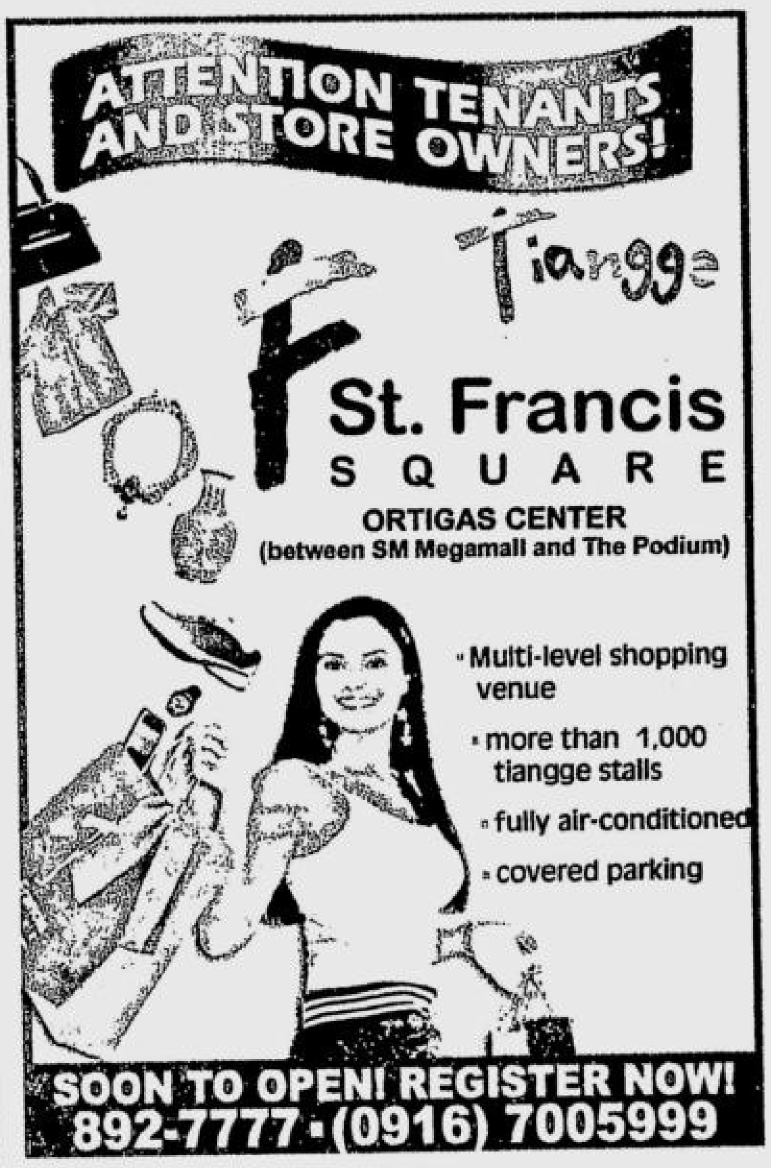

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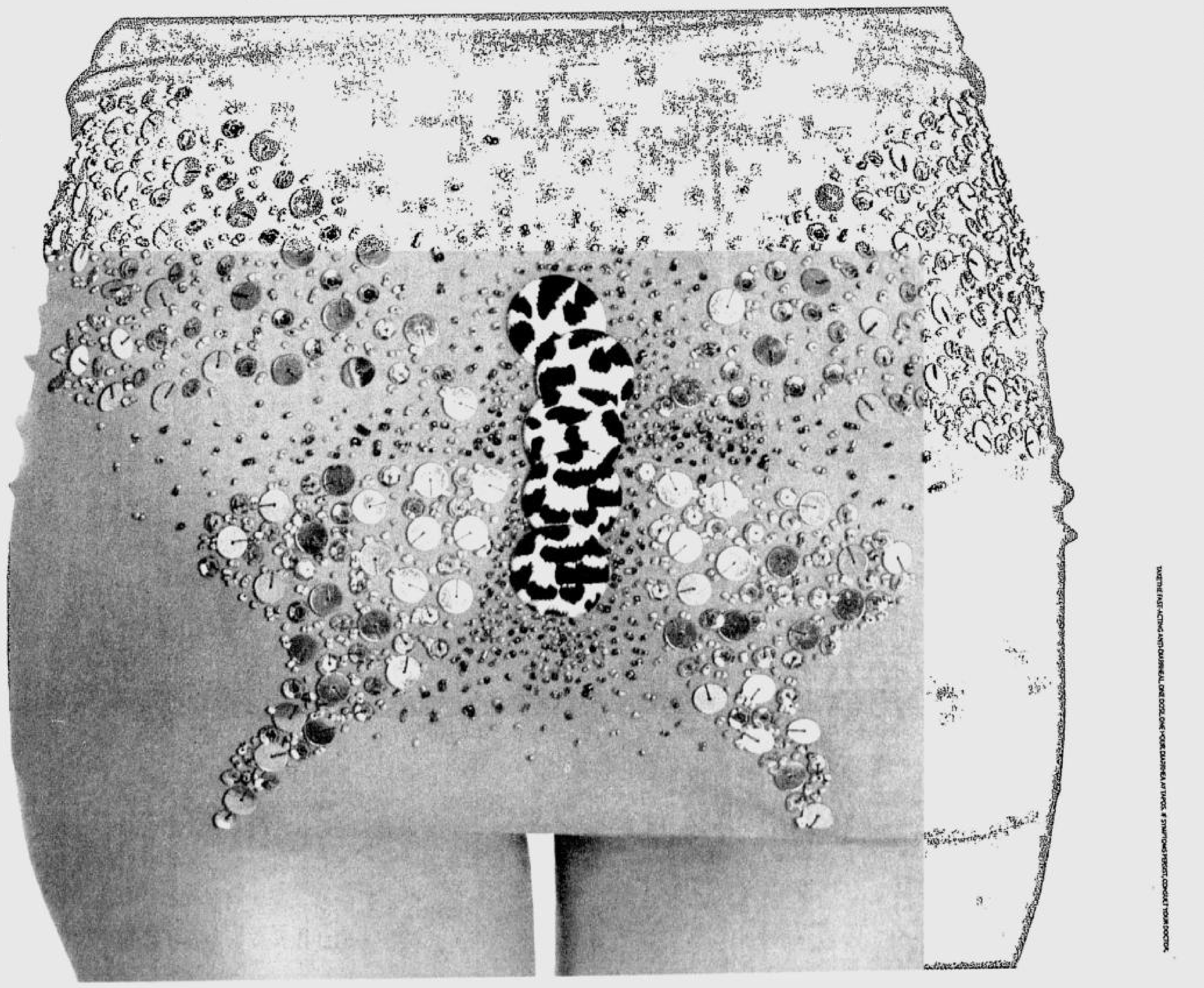
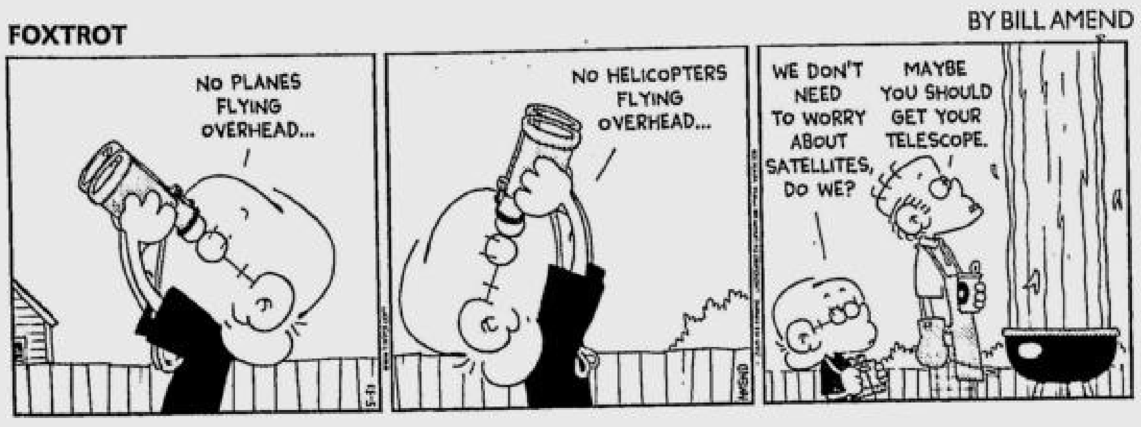
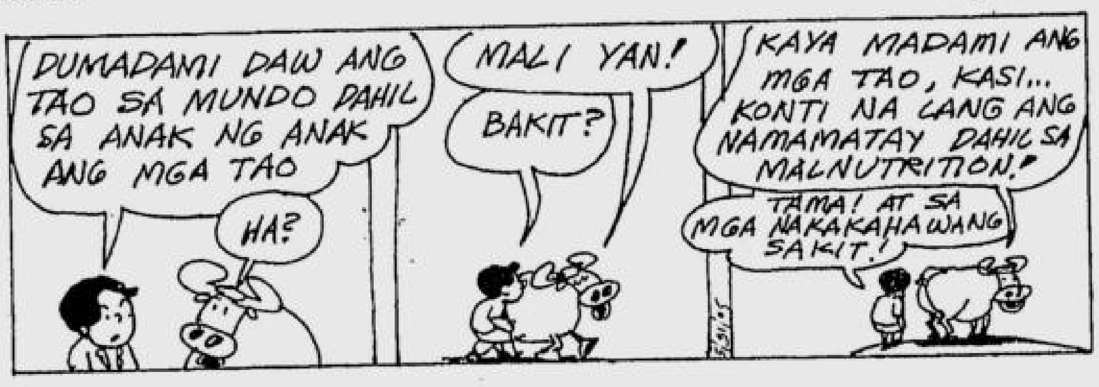


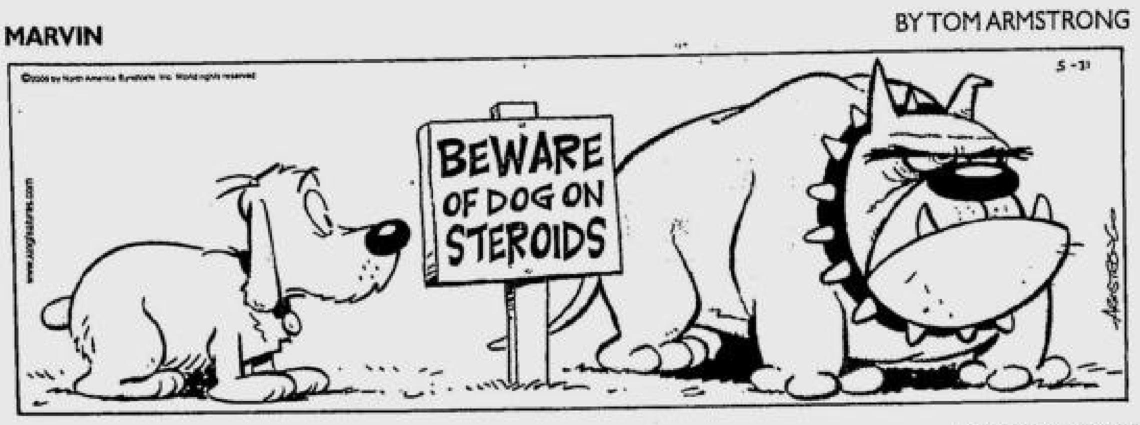
FOXTROT BY BILL AMEND


NO PLANES FLYING OVERHEAD...
NO HELICOPTERS FLYING OVERHEAD...
WE DON'T NEED TO WORRY ABOUT SATELLITES, DO WE?
MAYBE YOU SHOULD GET YOUR TELESCOPE.

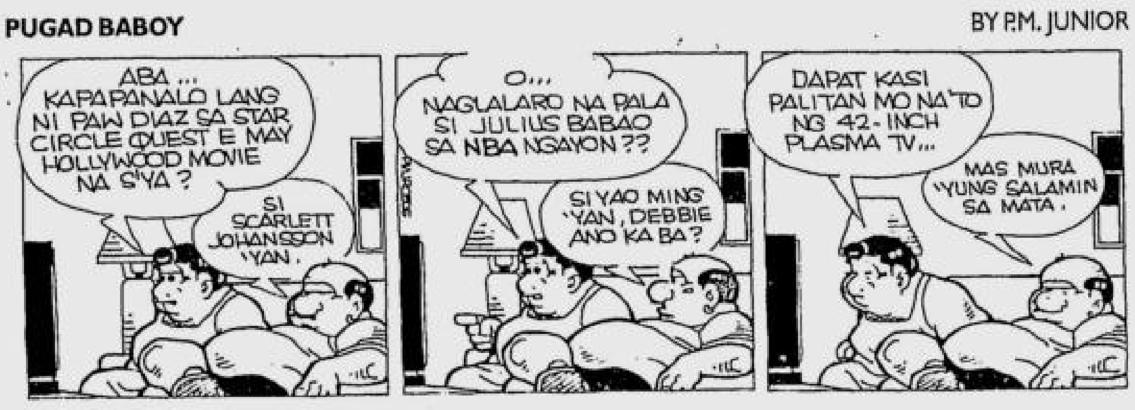
A. LIPIN BY JESS ABRERA


DUMADAMI DAW ANG TAO SA MUNDO DAHIL SA ANAK NG ANAK ANG MGA TAO
HA?
MALI YAN!
BAKIT?
KAYA MADAMI ANG MGA TAO, KASI... KONTI NA LANG ANG NAMAMATAY DAHIL SA MALNUTRITION!
TAMA! AT SA MGA NAKAKAHAWANG SAKIT!
5.31.05

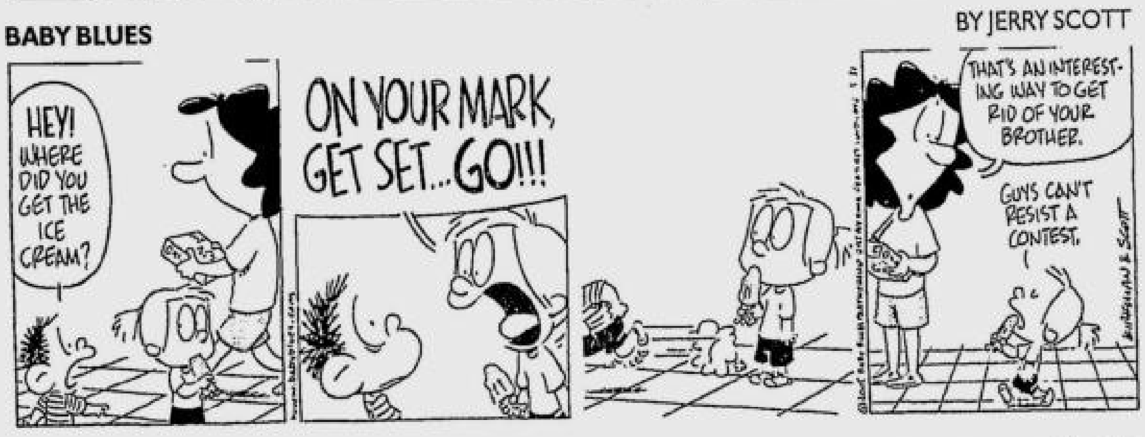
MARVIN BY TOM ARMSTRONG


5-31
BEWARE OF DOG ON STEROIDS

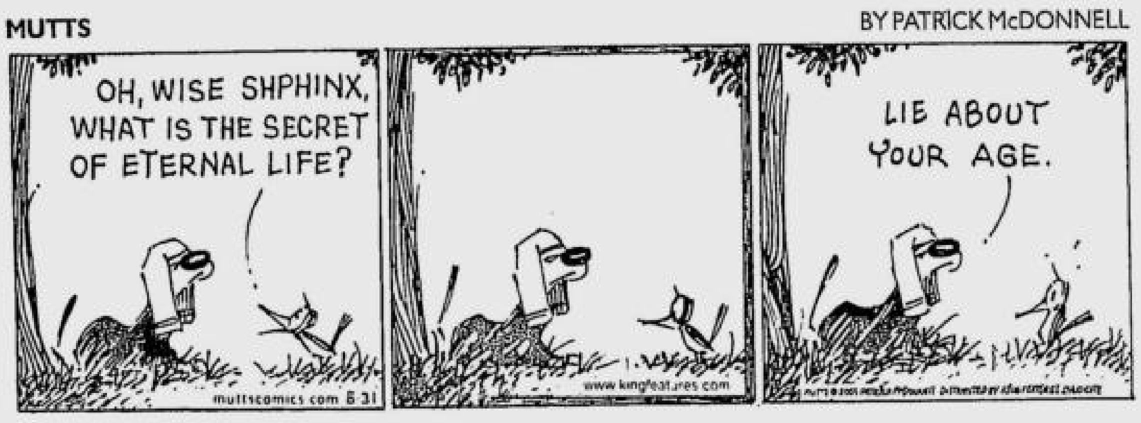
PUGAD BABOY BY P.M. JUNIOR


ABA ... KAPAPANALO LANG NI PAW DIAZ SA STAR CIRCLE QUEST E MAY HOLLYWOOD MOVIE NA S'YA ?
SI SCARLETT JOHANSSON 'YAN .
O... NAGLALARO NA PALA SI JULIUS BABAO SA NBA NGAYON ??
SI YAO MING 'YAN , DEBBIE ANO KA BA ?
DAPAT KASI PALITAN MO NA'TO NG 42-INCH PLASMA TV...
MAS MURA 'YUNG SALAMIN SA MATA .

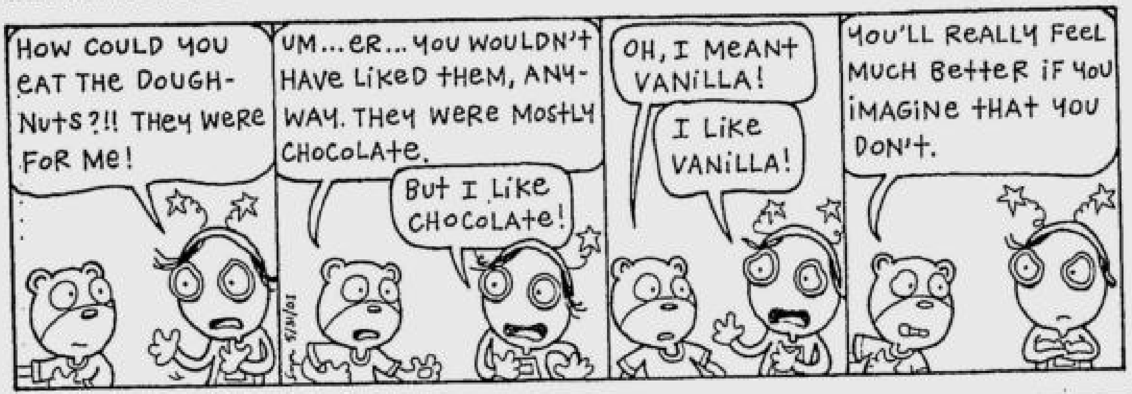
BABY BLUES BY JERRY SCOTT


HEY! WHERE DID YOU GET THE ICE CREAM?
ON YOUR MARK, GET SET...GO!!!
THAT'S AN INTERESTING WAY TO GET RID OF YOUR BROTHER.
GUYS CAN'T RESIST A CONTEST.

MUTTS BY PATRICK McDONNELL

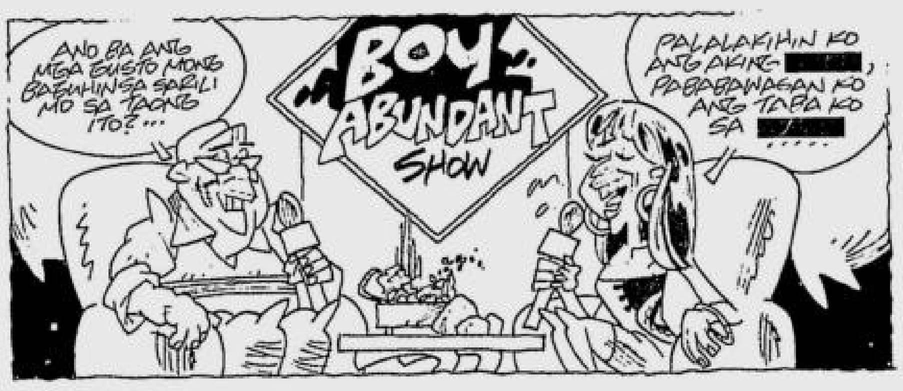

OH, WISE SHPHINX, WHAT IS THE SECRET OF ETERNAL LIFE?
LIE ABOUT YOUR AGE.
muttscomics.com 5-31
www.kingfeatures.com

ATOMO AND WEBOY BY LYRA GARCELLANO


How COULD YOU eAT THE DOUGH-NUTS?!! THEY WeRE FOR Me!
UM...eR...YOU WOULDN'T HAVE LIKeD THEM, ANY-WAY. THEY WeRe MOSTLY CHOCOLATe.
But I LIKe CHOCOLATe!
OH, I MeANT VANILLA!
I LIKe VANILLA!
YOU'LL ReALLY FeeL MUCH BetteR IF YOU IMAGINe THAT YOU DON'T.

DIVINE COMEDY BY STEVEN PABALINAS

NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTION NG ISANG SEXY STARLET


ANO BA ANG MGA GUSTO MONG BAGUHIN SA SARILI MO SA TAONG ITO?...
BOY ABUNDANT SHOW
PALALAKIHIN KO ANG AKING [redacted], PABABAWASAN KO ANG TABA KO SA [redacted]....

HOROSCOPE

BY FRANCIS DRAKE

YOU BORN TODAY: You easily convey the image of being tough and cool. Basically, you're a no-nonsense, straight-to-the-point kind of person. However, others know they can rely on you. You mean business! You're capable, energetic and convincing. Increased solitude this year will allow you to learn something important.

Birthdate of: Clint Eastwood, actor; Colin Farrell, actor; Brooke Shields, actress.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): You feel rebellious and highly independent today. Be careful that this does not trigger an accident of some kind while driving or walking. You still have to cooperate with the real world.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): Everything having to do with money and cash is a bit unpredictable today. You might find money; you might lose some. Be on the lookout! Guard against loss, and good luck with gain!

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): Conversations with parents and bosses are a bit dicey today. You feel very independent. You don't want anybody telling you what to do. You will not take instruction from others. (Cool your jets.)

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): You might hear surprising news from somebody in another country or a long distance away. You might also have some new, revolutionary ideas about politics or religion. You feel excited and bold today!

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): Friends are a source of surprise for you today. One of them might do something really bizarre! Or you might meet a new friend who's a real character.

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): You will have to be extra-diplomatic when talking to bosses and parents today. Your knee-jerk reaction is to tell somebody off. But is this wise? I doubt it. Just zip your lip.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): Sudden changes to travel plans or matters connected with publishing and the media are likely today. Just go with the flow. Expect power outages and computer crashes.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): Surprising news about children or about other people's possessions interests you today. An unexpected turn of events could affect shared property.

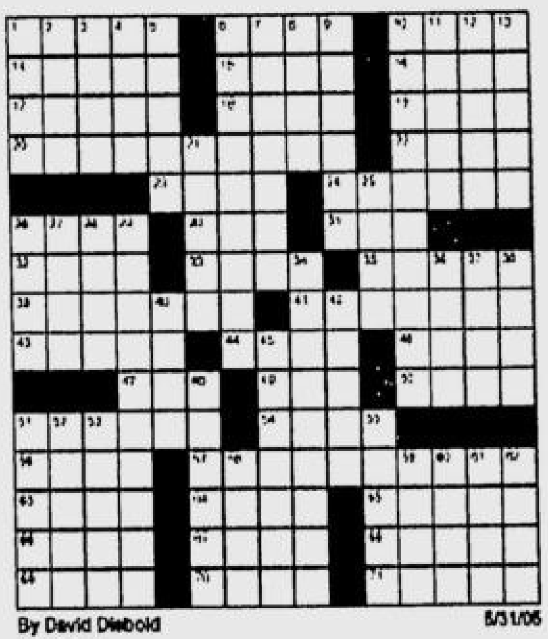
SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): You have to try hard to be cooperative with partners and friends today. Your impulse is to dismiss whatever they say. But you could regret this later. (Don't be lippy or impulsive.)

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): Power shortages, computer failures and breakdowns in equipment are likely at work today. You might even have a fire drill! Expect the unexpected.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): You might fall in love with somebody today. (This is the perfect day for love at first sight.) You have wild, creative ideas as well. (They're probably wonderful and original.)

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): Domestic squabbles are likely today. Similarly, something will happen to upset your home or family scene. Be prepared for this. Don't overreact.

DAILY CROSSWORD



By David Diebold
Tampa, FL
5/31/05

ACROSS
1 Secret hoard
6 Metal waste
10 Palm fruit
14 Contribute a tenth
15 Yearn (for)
16 Mil. infraction
17 Up to
18 Hebrides isle
19 Prison rec area
20 Desk calendar
22 Diet word
23 Pointed arch
24 Click beetle
26 Dull sound
30 Pacino and Capone
31 Light touch
32 Mount Olympus monarch
33 Annoying person
35 Book before Joel
39 Fancy socks
41 Pendant or stud
43 Impoverished
44 Hardens
46 Singer Brickell
47 Geneticist's study
49 Trawling device
50 Beatty film
51 Fax again
54 Colorado resort
56 Writer Buchanan
57 Beatles hit
63 Genesis man
64 Pennsylvania port
65 Hospital employee
66 Explorer Zebulon
67 Landlord's income
68 Behave theatrically
69 Observer
70 Wise man
71 Cut wood

DOWN
1 Framing upright
2 Editor Brown
3 ABA member
4 Tanker or liner
5 Phone greeting
6 Cowardly
7 Pride member
8 Author Rice
9 Equipped
10 Temporary employee
11 Stand by for
12 Rich cake
13 Venerable one
21 Wide open
25 Cowardly Lion's portrayer
26 Larger-___-life
27 In this place
28 Give a push
29 Waking fantasizer
34 Intimate chat
36 Facet
37 Lady of Arthurian legend
38 Lengthy time periods
40 Country singer Loretta
42 On the move
45 Being green-eyed?
48 Abaci, for example
51 Harvests
52 Murphy of movies
53 Plumber's helper
55 Wrinkles
58 Region
59 New World carnivorous feline
60 Front of a vessel
61 Italian noble family
62 Clarinet or oboe

Monday's Puzzle Solved

S	C	O	T	■	A	D	A	M	■	A	C	T	A	S
I	A	N	S	■	L	O	L	A	■	C	H	U	T	E
G	R	E	E	N	E	G	G	S	■	T	E	R	S	E
H	Y	S	T	E	R	I	A	■	D	I	F	F	E	R
■	■	■	S	A	T	E	■	H	O	O	■	B	A	S
A	N	G	E	R	■	■	D	E	A	N	N	A	■	■
N	O	R	■	S	U	B	U	R	B	■	E	T	O	N
K	E	A	N	■	N	E	P	A	L	■	E	T	R	E
A	L	S	O	■	L	I	E	N	E	E	■	L	E	X
■	■	S	W	O	O	N	S	■	■	W	I	E	S	T
T	A	R	■	H	A	G	■	M	A	I	D	■	■	■
E	L	O	P	E	D	■	M	A	I	N	I	D	E	A
A	C	O	R	N	■	Y	A	R	D	G	O	O	D	S
R	O	T	O	R	■	E	R	I	E	■	M	I	N	I
S	A	S	S	Y	■	A	Y	E	S	■	S	T	A	N

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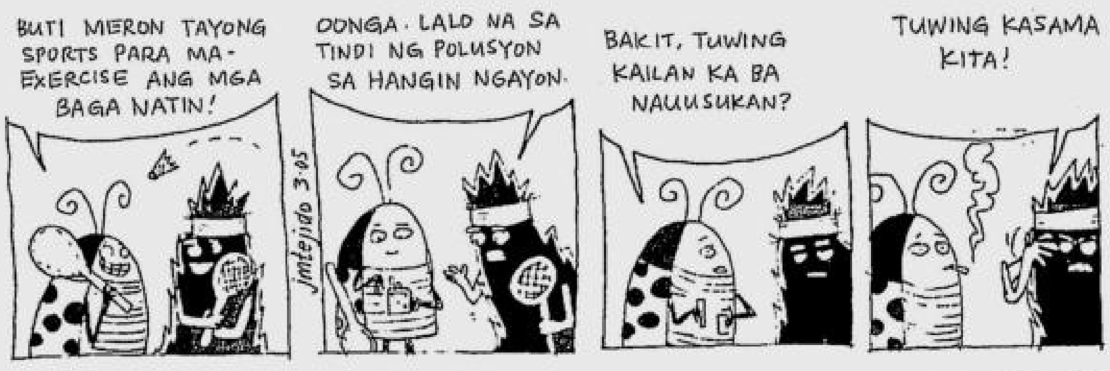
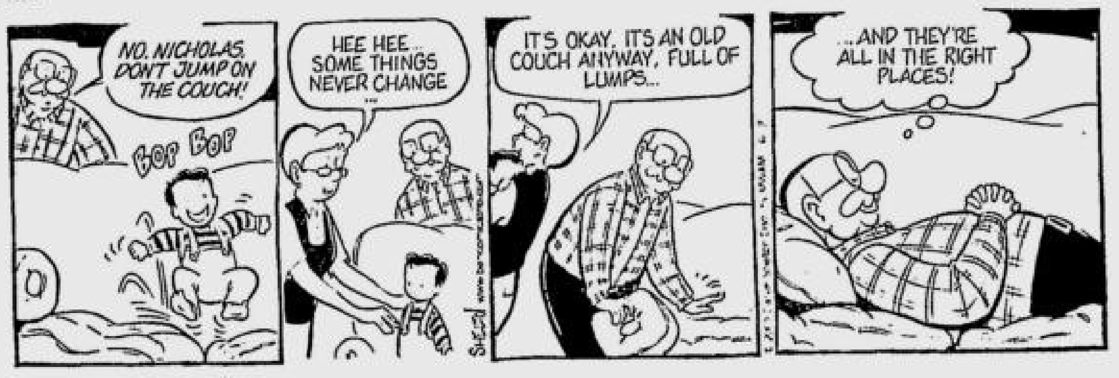
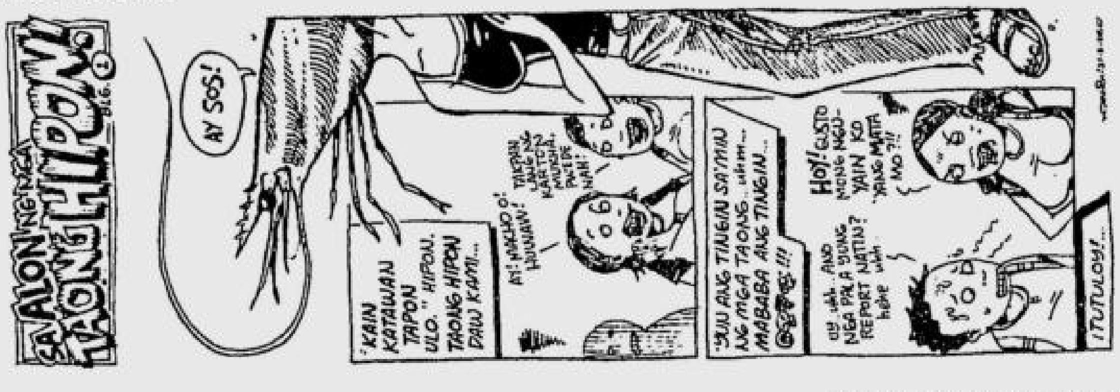
MIKROKOSMOS BY JOMIKE TEJIDO


BUTI MERON TAYONG SPORTS PARA MA-EXERCISE ANG MGA BAGA NATIN!
OONGA. LALO NA SA TINDI NG POLUSYON SA HANGIN NGAYON.
jmtejido 3.05
BAKIT, TUWING KAILAN KA BA NAUUSUKAN?
TUWING KASAMA KITA!

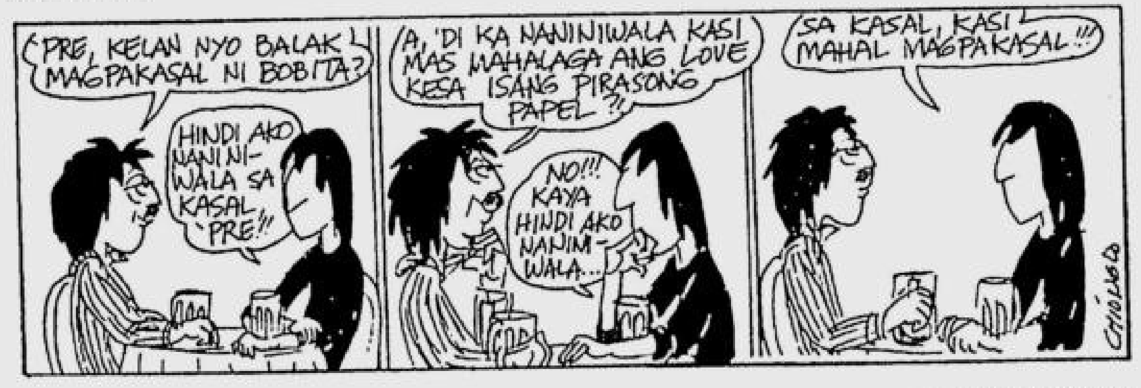
BEN BY DANIEL SHELTON


NO, NICHOLAS, DON'T JUMP ON THE COUCH!
BOP BOP
HEE HEE... SOME THINGS NEVER CHANGE ...
IT'S OKAY. IT'S AN OLD COUCH ANYWAY, FULL OF LUMPS...
...AND THEY'RE ALL IN THE RIGHT PLACES!

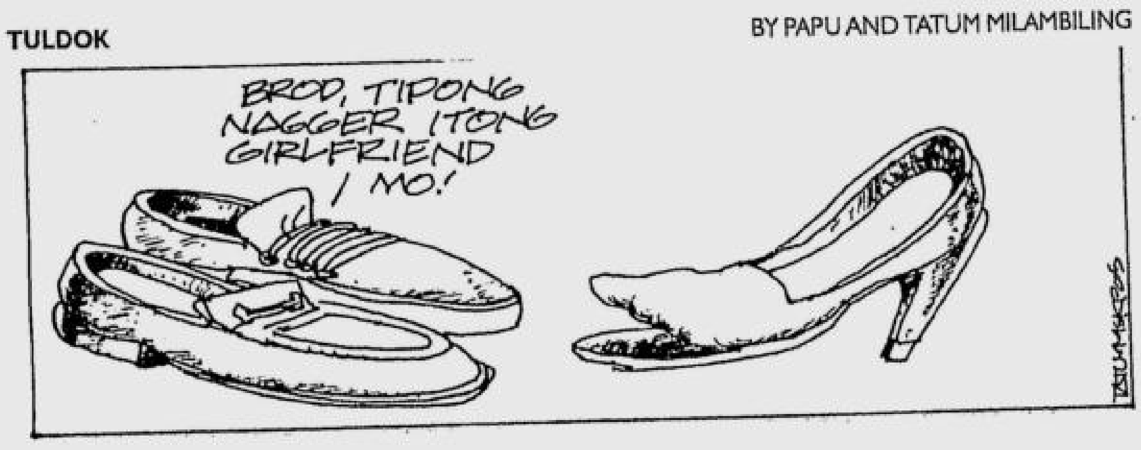
KIKO MACHINE BY MANIX ABRERA


SA ALON NG MGA TAONG HIPON! B.I.G. 1
AY SOS!
"KAIN KATAWAN TAPON ULO." HIPON. TAONG HIPON DAW KAMI...
AY! MACHO O! HUWAW!
TAKPAN LANG NG KARTON MUKHA, PWEDE NAH!
"YUN ANG TINGIN SA'MIN NG MGA TAONG... uhm... MABABA ANG TINGIN...
UY.. uhh.. ANO NGA PALA YUNG REPORT NATIN? hehe uhh
HOY! GUSTO MONG NGUYAIN KO 'YANG MATA MO ?!!
!TUTULOY!...

LOVEKNOTS BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


'PRE, KELAN NYO BALAK MAGPAKASAL NI BOBITA?
HINDI AKO NANINIWALA SA KASAL 'PRE!!
A, 'DI KA NANINIWALA KASI MAS MAHALAGA ANG LOVE KESA ISANG PIRASONG PAPEL ?!
NO!!! KAYA HINDI AKO NANINIWALA...
SA KASAL, KASI MAHAL MAGPAKASAL!!!
CHIONGLO

TULDOK BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING


BROD, TIPONG NAGGER ITONG GIRLFRIEND MO!

Questions on astral projection, angels, etc.

INNER AWARENESS

Jaime T. Licauco

I AM a 25-year-old geology graduate of UP and now work as research assistant there. Since childhood, I've been fascinated with the psychic world. I bought your book recently, "Exploring the Powers of Your Inner Mind" (revised edition). I love it and what you've written... continues to amaze me...

(Here) are my questions...

1. ... I believe I've experienced astral projection. I often regard it as just a (bad) dream. It usually happens when I stay up late and I am exhausted. I have dreams where I can't move my body. I can feel but cannot see my arm. However, I can actually 'see' my surroundings.

I also see beings beside my bed like shadows. Just recently I saw a child running to my room (followed by) his (or her) pregnant mother (who) gestured not to disturb my sleeping body.

Are they real spirits or just my imagination? If they are spirits, why is the mother pregnant? Do spirits get pregnant?

What you have experienced are real out-of-body experiences (OOBE) or astral projection. The beings you saw as astral beings are real and not products of your imagination.

Many people experience astral projection during sleep. When this happens, do not panic because you will surely return to your body. It is when you panic that problems occur. The astral body is sometimes called the Desire Body, because it goes wherever you want it to go.

Spirits, of course, do not get pregnant. It was only your impression. Some women appear pregnant when they are not. How many well-known movie actresses were rumored to be pregnant only for them to deny it later?

2. If we all have spirit guides (or guardian angels) why can't we see them during astral projection? And if we attract negative entities (because of fear) during OOBE, then where are our guardians who are supposed to protect us? When we move to the lower planes with negative entities, do our spirit guides come with us?"

First, let me make a distinction between the two terms often used interchangeably. A guardian angel is a Christian concept. It refers to what is called "messenger of God." An angel is pure spirit. A guardian angel, according to this belief, is assigned by God to each person upon birth.

A spirit guide may have been human before but now a highly evolved being that guides an individual by mutual agreement in his journey through life. A person may have several spirit guides but only one guardian angel.

The astral world has many levels. If you go to the lower, almost physical, level of the astral plane, you won't see spirits or astral beings.

According to one belief, the astral world has seven levels. Each level has seven sublevels or planes. According to this belief, this is what Christ meant when he said, "In my father's house are many mansions and I go to prepare a place for you."

Our guardian angels are always with us but our spirit guides may leave us once in a while to attend to others. Yes, they are with us even when we attract negative spirits but they cannot interfere with our karma nor with our will.

3. Psychics say the physical plane has the lowest vibratory rate. Why then do we have to reincarnate? Can't we stay in our spirit state by free will? Also, if reincarnation is true, why does population grow? Where do the (additional people) come from? Why does it seem that more and more criminals are born and the world seems to be getting worse?

The purpose of reincarnation is to perfect ourselves and to achieve divinity. To reach this goal, we need to undergo all types of experiences over many lifetimes and realms. We do not reincarnate only in the physical world but also in other states of being, in other planets and galaxies. We incarnate on earth to experience physical life and learn from it.

Population grows because not all that are now on earth were here before. Some are new souls who are on earth for the first time. Where do they come from? They were also created by God before time began. They wait for the physical vehicle (the embryo) to occupy. Many await physical incarnation.

It only seems that the world is getting worse and worse. Actually, it is not. Consciousness of the spirit world is greater today than before. We were savages before, eating each other, now we are more civilized and technologically advanced.

I am not sure if more criminals are born today than before. But what I know is there are many saintly beings and wise men and women being born today.

4. What are negative entities? Are they demons? What makes them negative? Are they also governed by the law of karma?

Negative entities are not necessarily demons. They could be earth-bound spirits of the dead who want revenge or who were very bad when they were alive and continue to be bad in the afterlife. There are also negative spirits or elementals that may harm human beings.

Yes, they are also governed by the laws of karma. They also pay for their misdeeds because karma is the universal law of justice that adjusts effects to rightful causes.

Address letters to this column to Prince Plaza I, 106 Legazpi St., Legazpi Village, Makati City. Call 8107245 or 8926806 for information on seminars I conduct. E-mail jlicauco@edsamail.com.ph or visit http://www.jlicauco.shorturl.com. Listen to my dzMM radio program 7-8 p.m. every Sunday

PHILIPPINES
HealthToday
why happy thoughts
does your child cheat? YOU could be the reason why
top 10 ways to treat aging skin
New! the best Mind-Body books to keep you healthy
yes! Life begins at 40
Senator Pia
ons Bill

Feel young, stay young

THIS MONTH'S issue of HealthToday discusses how having the right attitude in the face of adversities will help you hurdle the obstacles and maintain better health.

Studies show a positive attitude will not only prevent depression, but also decrease the risk of infectious diseases.

Does life really begin at 40? A gynecologist says turning 40 is either a milestone or a maelstrom, depending on your attitude. Being passionate about your dreams and beliefs is key to staying young.

One woman who stays young because of her passions is Sen. Pia Cayetano. After losing two very important people in her life, Cayetano has used the personal losses to fuel her zeal and determination as chair of the Senate Committee on Health and Demography.

HealthToday starts a new section, "Healthy Reads" that will keep you updated on developments. It is also a book club organized by HealthToday, in collaboration with PowerBooks. Featured books are carefully selected to nourish the readers' mind, body and spirit.

Read the complete articles in the May issue of HealthToday available in all bookstores, newsstands, and retail outlets nationwide. Call 8860333 local 112 or e-mail enquiry.ph@asia.cmpmedica.com.

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The Westin Philippine Plaza on Roxas Boulevard. is a world-class resort with everything.

Members of the Westin Sports Club and Spa can have golf lessons with a pro at the 18-hole putt-and-pitch green, or at the aqua range, driving golf balls into the sea.

Those who prefer tennis can bring a partner or train with an instructor on the mateflex-surface day-and-night covered court.

The club has a lagoon-shaped pool and two long, winding slides for youngsters. An outdoor restaurant offers a la carte service at lunch.

A state-of-the-art gym also offers the services of a personal trainer.

The club has different kinds of massage. Facial and body treatments are also available.

Tips for healthier love life

MIRROR, the healthy lifestyle Magazine, says spending time in the gym is not only healthy but also sexy.

According to the magazine, exercise stimulates, increases blood flow. It also raises the level of feel-good endorphins. A workout makes you feel more sensitive and alert and also gives you a better body image.

The latest issue of Mirror will also give you some tricks to improve your lovemaking skills. Also in this issue, Dr. Isabel Lopez Nazal, a pioneer in the skin clinic business, shows how dermatological treatment can do wonders, using herself as an example.

Television host and singer Toni Gonzaga tells why she moved from GMA-7 to ABS-CBN.

Mirror is a publication of the Philippine Graphic Publications, Inc.

MIRROR
Improve your lovemaking skills
Caring for a pet snake
How to get a hyper kid to bed
Summer coolants
10 BEST halo-halo treats

I got some skeletons in my closet, and I don't know if no one knows it.
So before they thrown me inside my coffin and close it, I'ma expose it.
EMINEM, "CLEANING OUT MY CLOSET"

Skeleton in your closet? Make no bones about it!

By Lizzie O. Luna

Who doesn't have a secret? A secret that's so embarrassing or damaging that you just want to forget it ever happened? A wild past. A minor criminal record. A major slip-up. An illicit love affair. An illegitimate child. An expensive collection or hobby. A harmful addiction. An under-the-table business dealing. An unusual attraction for fellow males (or fellow females).

Professional or personal, everybody has kept something from someone at some point in his or her life. And while you may think that not thinking about it will make it all go away, you probably know that that's easier said than done.

Remember what the elders used to say? "*Walang bahong hindi nabubunyag.*" You'll realize they're right when the skeleton in your closet finds a way to expose itself at the least opportune time. You might talk about how you've longed to bury it in the ground; it's just that taking it out from the closet means someone may see you with it.

I say, it's time you owned up to those bones! Coming out with a secret may be scary but living in silence is just plain torture. Unlike the actual thing which has to be buried for closure, closet skeletons need to be brought out in the open so you can finally get on with your life.

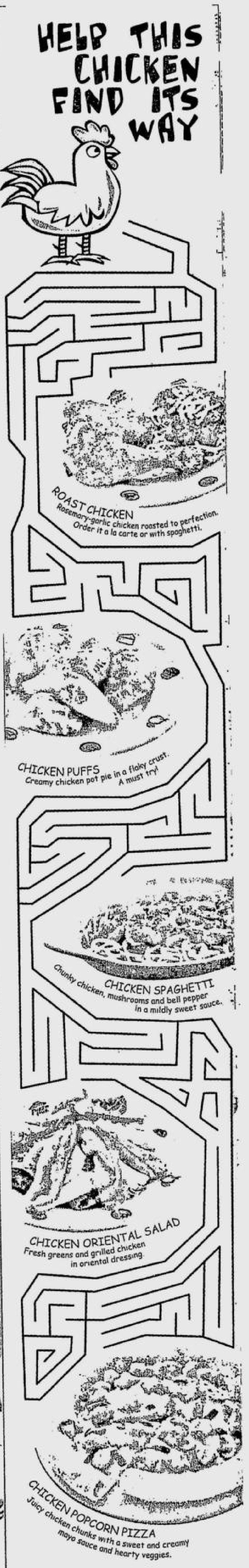
Here are some tips to help you do it:

1. **Prepare for the reveal.**
   Think of what, how, when and where you'd divulge your secret. Timing is important – though you can choose a good day, don't schedule your big revelation on personal holidays. It's not advisable to relieve yourself of your burden while ruining a special occasion forever.
2. **Break it gently.**
   Choose words that will minimize the pain you'll be inflicting. Bear in mind that what you are going to do will still be hurtful so don't be cocky and curt about it. Give it time to sink in. And do expect a Q&A session to follow.
3. **Take the flak.**
   Imagine how friends and family are going to react to your secret! May it be surprise, shock, disgust or damnation, be ready to accept whatever "punishment" they bestow on you. After all, it's quite natural for them to be hurt from being kept in the dark for so long.

And when you're done with it, I'm sure you'd agree that bringing out the skeleton from the closet is a thorn off the side of yours.

Just make sure you don't go accumulating more of them!

This is an INQuest Adventure game clue
For previous chapters and clues, log on to www.inquestor.com
REGISTER NOW FOR FREE! Text INQ Reg <full name>*<complete address>*<age>*<gender> (Ex: INQ Reg Juan dela Cruz*1234 Ortigas Ave Pasig*34*M) send to 2320 for Globe/Touch Mobile and Sun Cellular subscribers or 309 for Smart/Addict/Talk 'N Text subscribers.


HELP THIS CHICKEN FIND ITS WAY
ROAST CHICKEN
Rosemary-garlic chicken roasted to perfection. Order it a la carte or with spaghetti.
CHICKEN PUFFS
Creamy chicken pot pie in a flaky crust. A must try!
CHICKEN SPAGHETTI
Chunky chicken, mushrooms and bell pepper in a mildly sweet sauce.
CHICKEN ORIENTAL SALAD
Fresh greens and grilled chicken in oriental dressing
CHICKEN POPCORN PIZZA
Juicy chicken chunks with a sweet and creamy mayo sauce and hearty veggies.

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Sweat it out

WELL AND GOOD

Tina Juan

THEY say horses sweat, men perspire and women "glow." Whichever way you look at it, it has been an incredibly hot and sweaty season. The rainy months are almost upon us but, because we live in a humid country, perspiration will always be part and parcel of our lives.

Why we sweat

The body is like an engine that never stops running. Like all engines, it produces heat. The more the muscles contract (like during exercise), the more heat is produced.

Your body has to be efficient at keeping you cool or you would rapidly overheat and collapse in 15-20 minutes. The reason this doesn't happen is because the body has several ways of cooling down.

The first is radiation. Heat radiates out of the skin and is absorbed by the environment if the surroundings are cooler than our body.

The second is conduction. This is the transfer of heat through direct contact. For example, if you go swimming in a cold mountain river, the water directly absorbs the heat of your body. The opposite is also true. If you swim in a hot spring, your body will absorb the heat.

The third is convection. Moving air helps cool us down. Think how refreshed you feel when the wind blows, when you fan yourself or when you are under an electric fan.

The last is evaporation. Water from our blood absorbs the heat and rises to the surface of the skin via the sweat glands so it can evaporate and create a cooling effect.

In hot weather, sweating is the primary method of staying cool. The other methods are inefficient because the environment is hotter than the body. In hot and dry conditions like in the desert, sweat evaporates so fast you don't even notice it. But if the air is humid (full of moisture), sweat cannot evaporate.

That's why if you exercise in hot and humid conditions, sweat will roll and drip off your skin but you won't feel cooler. Since sweat cannot evaporate, the body needs the help of an air-conditioner (radiation), an electric fan or a good breeze (convection) to keep from overheating.

What sweat is made of

Sweat is composed mostly of water and trace substances like sodium chloride (salt), potassium, lactic acid and ammonia. Sodium and potassium are minerals that act as electrolytes to regulate blood pressure and water balance.

There are two types of sweat glands: apocrine and eccrine. Apocrine glands are actually scent glands located in the navel, armpits and groin. They produce a sticky kind of sweat that is odorless but rich in fatty acids that bacteria in the skin feed on to produce the familiar BO smell.

The eccrine sweat glands, meanwhile, are all over the body and produce a watery sweat that helps regulate body temperature.

Everyone perspires

Everyone has a different sweating pattern. How much you sweat is affected by genetics, gender, age, fitness level and environment. Human beings can have between two to five million sweat glands. Women tend to sweat less and begin to sweat at higher temperatures compared to men.

It has been observed that people sweat less as they grow older. This means elderly people cannot tolerate heat as well as younger people. However, declining fitness levels might also be partially responsible because, in laboratory experiments, when both old and young participants were of similar fitness levels, there was no significant difference in their sweating patterns.

Fit people sweat more "efficiently" by sweating sooner in the workout, in other words, at lower internal temperatures. However, this doesn't mean that a fit person will always sweat more than an unfit person. A sedentary person doing the same intensity workout as a fit individual will get hot a lot faster and therefore will sweat more.

Overweight and obese people sweat more profusely than normal weight individuals because fat acts as an insulator that raises core temperatures.

The environment plays a big role in how much you are going to sweat. If you exercise in an air-conditioned room, you will not sweat as much because the cold dry air quickly evaporates your sweat. This doesn't mean you are not burning many calories (caloric burn depends on the intensity and duration of the exercise). It simply means your body can easily deal with the heat generated by the exercise.

Exercising in a hot and humid room will just exhaust you faster. You will not burn as many calories as you would like because you will stop working out sooner.

Invisible perspiration

If you weigh yourself right before going to bed and weigh yourself again right after waking up (without going to the bathroom), you will find that you are lighter. No, you haven't been sleepwalking to your gym. You lose water through transpiration or "invisible perspiration," as well as through exhaled respiration (in the form of minute water droplets).

The overnight loss of water through your skin and breath explains why you are "thinner" with a flatter stomach when you wake up.

Dangerous practices

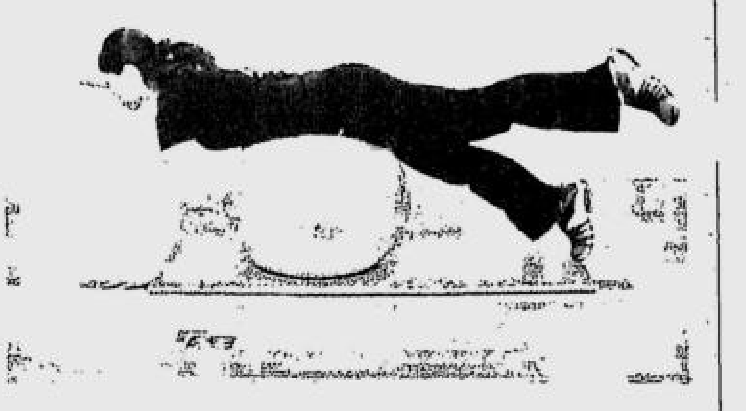
Not drinking water before, during and after exercise is a dangerous practice. It's like taking your car out for a long drive without any water in your radiator. If you work out for more than 90 minutes in very hot and humid conditions, a sports drink is more appropriate than water to replace lost electrolytes.

Meanwhile, wearing plastic or rubber clothes while exercising is like wrapping your engine in plastic and then expecting your car to still run properly. You would never do these things to your car, so why do it to your body?

To download sample mini-workouts, go to www.tinajuanfitness.info/miniworkouts

EXERCISE OF THE WEEK

Prone opposite arm and leg lift on stability ball



THIS is an all-around strengthener for the muscles at the back of the body—back of the shoulders, lower back, buttocks and hamstrings.

Equipment:

Stability ball

Exercise technique:

1. Kneel down with the ball in front of you.
2. Place your stomach on the ball and roll forward until you have both hands on the floor. Your legs should be straight behind you on your toes. Keep your legs a little wider than hip width for better balance.
3. Lift your right arm and left leg up to hip level.
4. Slowly lower down.
5. Do the desired number of repetitions then switch sides.

Performance tips:

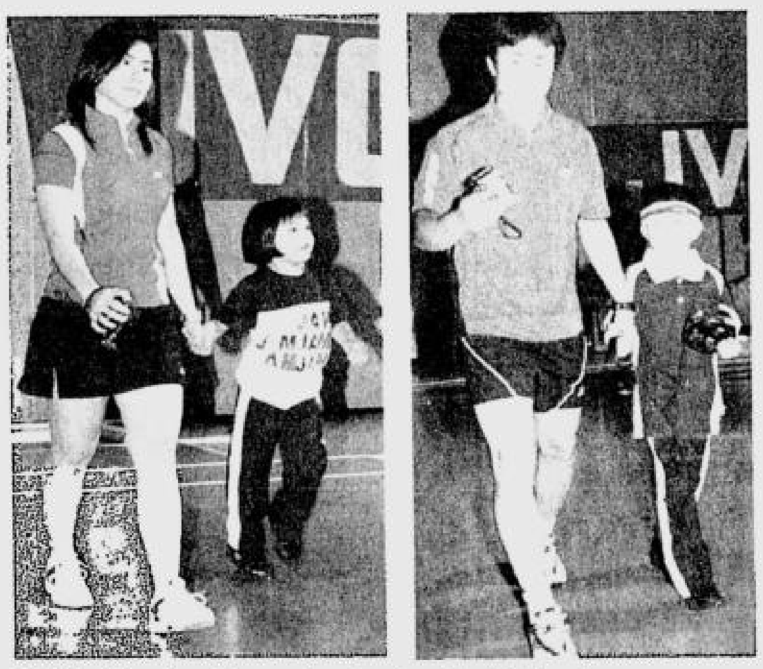
1. Exhale as you lift; inhale as you lower down.
2. Look down at the floor but keep your neck in line with your spine.
3. Lift and lengthen.
4. Make sure to contract your buttocks muscles as you lift your leg to protect your back.

Repetitions:

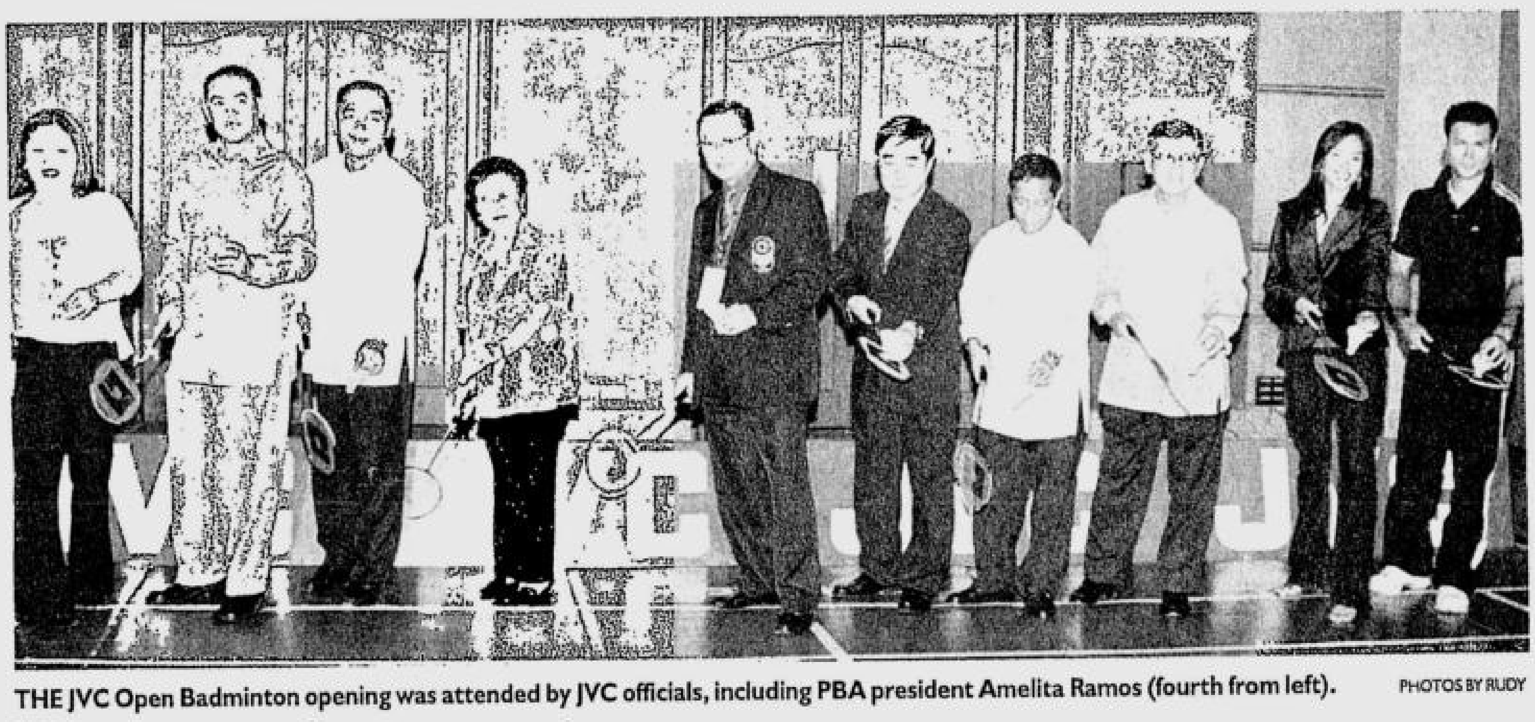
Do 10 repetitions on each side.

Do 10 repetitions alternating sides.

Hold for 10 seconds. Do three sets on each side.



MINI fashion show featured professional badminton players, including Kennie and Kennevic Asuncion, and showcased digital cameras and DVD players from JVC.



THE JVC Open Badminton opening was attended by JVC officials, including PBA president Amelita Ramos (fourth from left).

PHOTOS BY RUDY ESPERAS

Call for entries to 2005 Badminton Open

IT TOOK less than half a decade for badminton to transform itself from a casual sidewalk pastime to a serious sport. Now, it almost rivals basketball in its grip on local sports lovers.

JVC first became associated with the local badminton scene with 2001's JVC Open and the 2001 Asian Badminton Championships held in Manila. It continues its commitment to the sport with yearly competitions.

The JVC Open Badminton Championships is designed to discover talents who can be trained for future national teams. Now on its fifth year, the JVC Open, which is slated this June, promises more excitement and action.

"This is going to be the richest, biggest, grandest JVC Open so far in terms of prize money, participation and level of plays. After four years of being in the forefront of badminton, we want to give these players the best tournament to play in," says Hideyuki Takato, president of JVC (Phils.), Inc., during the recent launch of the 2005 Open at the New World Renaissance Hotel.

Takato renewed JVC's commitment to the development of badminton as a fun and competitive sport for all ages. To give those in the countryside venues the chance to hone their talents and skills, JVC has also staged ongoing regional tournaments in Pampanga, Cebu, Davao and Bacolod.

Top badminton officials and key JVC officers were present during the launch, including Philippine Badminton Association president Amelita Ramos, JVC (Phils.) chair lawyer Faustino Salud, JVC (Phils.) general manager Kazue Salud, Philippine Badminton Association Executive vice president. Gen Edgar Aglipay (Ret.), Makati Mayor Jejomar Binay and Philippine Sports Commission officer-in-charge William "Butch" Ramirez.

The event, to be held under the auspices of the PBA, Philippine Olympic Committee and the Philippine Sports Commission, will also serve as part of the national team's preparation for this year's SEA Games.

To level the playing field, the organizing IMG has put up a separate tournament for the cream of the crop, the elite masters. This special tournament is exclusively for the former and current members of the national team, varsity players and past JVC Open champions.

The 5th JVC Open Badminton Championships will take place June 26-July 10. The tournament is divided into different categories: the Elite Masters, Elite, Juniors, Veterans Elite, Veterans Novice, Corporate Team and Celebrity categories.

Celebrities Richard and Lucy Gomez, Cindy Kurleto and Jerome John Hughes will also take part in the tournament.

An invitational High School Team Event will be held. Qualifying rounds will be at the PowerSmash Badminton Center from June 26-July 3, and July 4-10, at the Glorietta Activity Center.

Registration starts on June 3. Fees are pegged at P200 per single entry and P300 for players joining two or three events. In corporate plays, exclusively for the country's top 1,000 firms, entry fee is at P2,500, with each team allowed to have a minimum of six players and maximum of 10. Deadline of submission of entries is on June 15.

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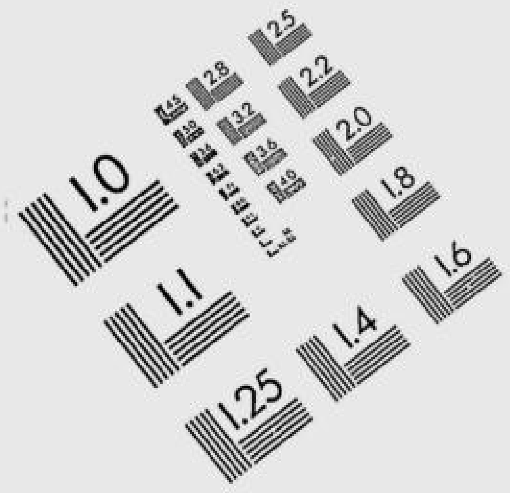
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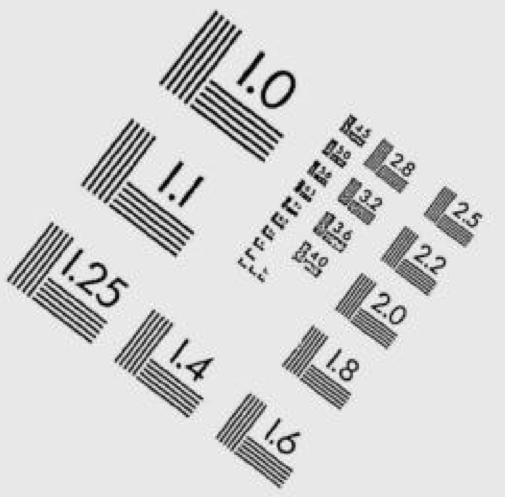
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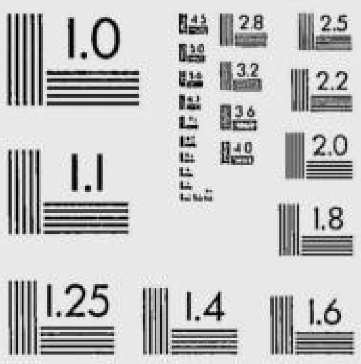
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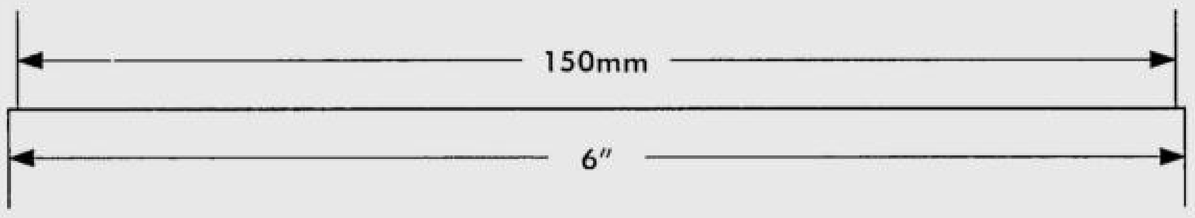

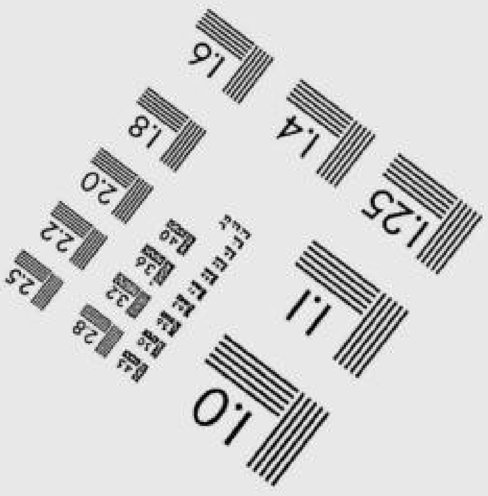
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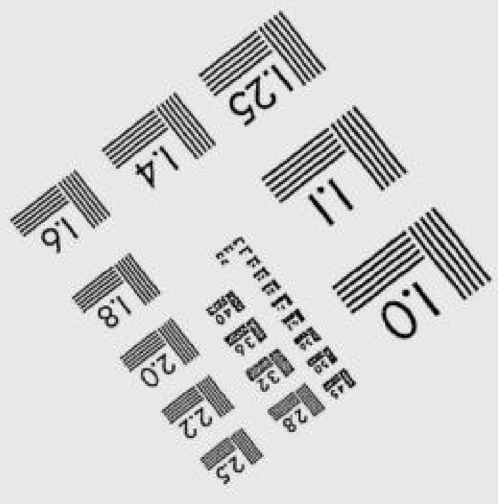
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